TATTLINGS OF A RETIRED POLITICIAN

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Tattlings of a Retired Politician

Special Limited Political Edition

William Bradley

Tattlings of a Retired Politician

¶ Being the letters (non-partisan) of *Hon. William Bradley*, Ex-Governor and former veteran of practical politics, written to his friend and protege *Ned*, who is still busy "carving a career back in the old state"

BY

FORREST CRISSEY

Author of *The Country Boy*

WITH FIFTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS BY

JOHN T. McCUTCHEON

1904

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This book is affectionately
dedicated to my dear friend
HON. LUTHER M. DEARBORN
of Illinois

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FOREWORD.

For years the writer of Tattlings of a Retired Politician has enjoyed a somewhat wide and intimate acquaintance with those men who play the game of politics and who have, in various degrees, demonstrated their skill and leadership in that kind of contest. He has listened with unfailing entertainment to the anecdotes, stories, and incidents of their struggles for place, power and preferment. But most of all has he enjoyed the bits of homely philosophy, the picturesque aphorisms and the shrewd observations which have dropped from the lips of these Americans who, from varied and complex motives, have been drawn into the game of popular government.

To focus this phase of American character as faithfully, as vividly and as entertainingly as possible into the following pages has been a pleasing and a fascinating task. Looking

back upon it from the final word, the author believes that the actual motives, conditions and methods that obtain wherever a caucus is held or a ballot box opened have been fairly portrayed and that the viewpoint he has presented is the one actually taken by any American who has had a wide and first-hand experience in practical politics.

This is not so much because many of the stories embodied in these familiar letters from William Bradley, the retired political veteran, to his friend Ned are drawn from actual experience and have a substantial foundation in fact, as because the observations of the former legislator, Congressman, Governor and United States Senator reflect the spirit of the practical politician and reveal his motives, methods and characteristics.

That form of literary expression known as the "letter" has been chosen for this work because it affords the most natural medium for terse, homely and unconventional expres-

sion in strict keeping with the character of the subject. In writing to a familiar friend one may go directly to the theme in hand without formality or introduction; epigram, anecdote and story come naturally within the scope of the friendly letter and the handicap of conventionality is less upon the pen of the writer of such a letter than upon the hand of the writer who uses any other literary medium.

During the serial publication of a portion of the papers which make up this book, the writer has been cheered by expressions of approval and appreciation from many men who have achieved places of high political distinction.

To this generous and discriminating encouragement from such authoritative sources he is especially indebted, for it has helped him to hope, with increased confidence, that, in some measure, he has been able to put into the letters of William Bradley something of the humor, the philosophy, the romance and the

tragedy of actual politics as the game is played in every portion of our Republic, and also that this delineation will have interest for the men who are intimately familiar with the game as well as for those for whom it has a touch of mystery.

Sincerely,

Forrest Crissey.

Chicago, April, 1904.

STILL-HUNTS AND STOLEN MARCHES.

Being the remarks of "Bill" Bradley, former legislator, congressman, Governor and United States Senator, to his younger friend Ned, who has written that he has a cinch on a re-election and that he proposes to take it easy in this campaign, as there is no need of hustling. Incidentally the retired "party warhorse" expresses himself on the irksomeness of "existence by corporate courtesy" and the delights of retirement.

TATTLINGS

OF A

RETIRED POLITICIAN

CHAPTER I.

STILL-HUNTS AND STOLEN MARCHES.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

Of course I'm glad that nothing short of an epidemic of sudden death can shut you out of a re-election. It's good to be comfortably sure about things of this sort.

But my observation reminds me that straight roads to the State House have an amazing way of wandering off into the underbrush and that public sentiment can blow more different ways, at one and the same time, than the flame of a campaign torch in a Fall wind. Any good, average ballot-box has thrown down more cock-sure men than ever won election bets or

saw the man that struck Billy Patterson. And you may draw sight drafts against the fact that when there's a whole lot depending on one of these Heaven-insured "certainties" it's time to get scared and hustle.

The man who lies down and goes to sleep on the soft side of a political cinch stands a good chance of waking up just in time to see his hide nailed to the barn door by the fellow who couldn't sleep because he had to whistle in the face of expected defeat in order to keep his courage up.

Perhaps you've forgotten the story of "Old Gab" Hitchcock, down in Hebron County. He got his name from his "gift of gab" on the auction block. There hadn't been a sale "at public vendue" in his territory for thirty years at which he hadn't officiated. He could talk the burrs right off the back of a Southdown sheep; but there were two subjects on which he was as silent as a tombstone.

Politics and religion tied knots in his tongue and when they were mentioned he closed up tight. But he knew the name of every baby

Old Gab Hitchcock knew the name of every baby in the district.

in the three counties that he traveled and how many teeth each youngone had cut up to the time of his last call; he never failed to remember the special brand of cookery on which each housewife was particularly strong, and even the savagest dogs wagged their tails in a friendly way when Old Gab rode in at the front bars.

But when it came to politics, everybody counted the auctioneer out and considered that he didn't cut any figure. In fact, being a Republican, he seldom took the trouble to vote, as Democrats were thicker in his district than thistles, and voting was mighty discouraging exercise. He said he was glad he was on the off side and belonged to the "hopeless minority," because it saved him the bother of going to caucuses and the polls, knowing that his party didn't stand any more chance to get out alive than a national prohibition bill in Congress.

One Winter, as you will remember, there was a deadlock in the legislature on the election of a United States Senator. An actual

gain of one vote on the Republican side would have settled it; but sometimes one bird is harder to bag than a whole flock on other occasions—and this was one of those times!

Day after day, and month after month, the thing hung fire. All that money and pull and poker and highballs could do had been done—and still the joint ballot stuck at the same old figure! The shiftiest campaigners that ever cracked the party whip had done their best and couldn't budge the count. Every dark horse in each party had his ears pricked up and was ready to snort like a freight engine the minute there was a sign of a break. But no sign was given, and the big bosses simply held on, waiting for something to happen and lift the spell.

And, finally, it happened all right! One morning the member from Hebron County was found dead in his bed. That left the situation just where it was before, for the Republicans still lacked one vote of enough to elect and the Democrats had a three-to-one cinch on electing the member to fill the vacancy.

A special election was called, but the Re-

publican newspapers sorrowfully announced that there was no more hope of defeating the enemy in the Hebron district than of raising the late lamented to life. And the minority party didn't take interest enough in the contest to name a candidate—simply conceded the whole thing to the Democrats and lay down without a kick. Of course, that was in the days before the new-fangled Australian ballot had entered its appearance on the state statutes.

Spring plowing opened up particularly early that year and the contest for the United States Senatorship had dragged along through the Winter until it had become an old story.

Generally speaking, there was more interest in the farming counties in getting in a new crop than in sending a new Senator to Washington.

About that time, down in the Hebron district, auction sales fell off to such an extent that Old Gab Hitchcock had to take to shipping cattle in order to keep up his end, and he did a right smart bit of riding in his new call-

ing. There wasn't a road in Hebron or the adjoining counties that he didn't travel and he managed to pick up an amazing number of shipments of likely cattle for the Chicago market.

When the special election day came he was out in the back towns buying stock, and most of the farmers of the district were walking in furrows behind their plows. They knew that their candidate, the Democrat, had a copper-riveted cinch on the election, for there was no one running against him. So they stuck to their Spring plowing and made the most of the fine weather.

But about 4 o'clock that afternoon, the Republican voters began to rattle out of the back towns as if the woods were on fire. It took an hour for the Democrats at the polling places to get their systems permeated with the suspicion that something was doing—and by the time they had waked up, it was all done!

They sent out an alarm to the Faithful, but before the stay-at-homes could pull their boots on and hitch up the teams, the polls had closed.

There wasn't even time to put up a counting-out scheme—and when the ballots were counted a district of frantic Democrats faced the fact that foxy Old Gab Hitchcock had been elected to the legislature on the Republican ticket.

The first day he took his seat he settled the United States Senatorship—and went out of the auction business for keeps! The party, as you know, has taken good care of him ever since, and he doesn't care how many babies are cutting teeth back in old Hebron, either!

Then, again, after you've hustled hard and got everything into your wigwam, snug and tight, you can't be sure that the other fellow will not sneak in, over night, and stampede all your braves.

If you don't think this is true, remember the history of Old Sanctity, who tried to break into politics up in the city, from Little Danny's ward. There was a healthy colored population in that ward and the old man had been running a mission Sunday School and private bureau of charity so long there that he thought

it was easy. He wanted to shine as a white-enamel reformer, and so he opened the campaign early and held meetings every night in the Heart of Africa. To all appearances, he had the whole colony spellbound, and it looked as if he would carry the Dark Continent with a whoop.

There wasn't enough political guile in the old man to keep him from opening a mass meeting with family prayers, and it was all his campaign committee could do to get postage funds and hall rent out of him. At his final pow-wow fully three hundred kinky-haired voters were present.

Old Sanctity, as the boys called him, dismissed the meeting with a smile of satisfaction and the feeling that the Mission School had been vindicated as a political power.

But down at the bottom of the stairs Little Danny had stationed a few business agents whose pockets bulged with half dollars. An hour later the whole dusky gang was gathered at a banquet of pork chops and fried chicken, across the street, and every guest at the board

Old Sanctity held nightly meetings in the heart of Africa.

had one of Danny's fifty-cent pieces in his pocket. After the votes were counted Old Sanctity hardly knew whether he had been a candidate or not.

Of course it wasn't clean politics for Danny to do this, and I only mention it to point the moral that certainties in politics are about as slippery propositions as greased pigs at county fairs, and that is isn't safe to carry elections on the somnambulistic basis.

There's a good deal more human nature than patriotism in the average citizen and when you bill him on any other valuation you're going to have a big shrinkage in the ballot box.

Livery hire and hustlers are cheap in comparison with eloquence and exalted hopes, and the man who calculates to keep in politics and come out on the heavy side of the polling list would better make up his mind to spend his money for buggy grease before the polls close instead of saving it for red fire and Roman candles with which to celebrate his election.

So, Ned, if you've decided to take things easy, and let the campaign "take care of it-

self " this time, as your letter suggests, it will not be necessary to wire me that the enemy put up a still hunt or there has been an unaccountable landslide " owing to a revulsion of sentiment on national issues," and that you have gone down as a victim of the revolt of the people against the " stubborn attitude of the party leaders on the tariff question." I'll understand, without this, that you've been catching up on the sleep you lost in the other campaigns.

You want to know if I don't sometimes have a hankering for the flesh-pots of Egypt and long to take a little hand in politics out here. Not by a jug full! A fellow who has put in the best years of his life in the political game and has been state legislator, Congressman, Governor and United States Senator and retired when he didn't have to isn't going out to a new country and begin the game all over again—not at my time of life. I'm out of it for good and all. I'm just a plain man and elected for life, too!

You remember how old General Gully used

to look when he came out to the annual encampment ball in full regalia, with his breast hung with badges and medals so thick they looked as if they had been pinned on with a choke-bore shotgun? Well; one day when I was cleaning up to get out of the Executive Chamber, I struck the "Frank and Pass Department" of my desk. Just for fun, I pinned those badges of corporate courtesy on the front of my coat. Alongside the picture which I made, old Gully would have looked as innocent of decorations as an eel. It made me squirm with shame as I looked in the glass and actually saw that I had been simply an official scrapbook for petty corporation favors.

By checking up I found that I did not hold a frank entitling me to breathe through the courtesy of a corporation.

Perhaps you don't recall how the harness of official favors used to gall me. Let me refresh your memory. Of course you remember John Bent, the "hired hand" member from Cottonwood Corners. All through the first session he sat over at the Speaker's right, surrounded

by the gang that came down from the city. When they found out that he was only a farm hand, the boys who were running things priced him at about two hundred and fifty. Little Danny was told off to fix John for the Electric bill. He never did give the particulars of his interview, but he put it plain that for all time to come it would be safe to pass up the farm hand and put him down on the other side without any special effort to " see " him.

Bent didn't introduce but one bill in the whole session and that was killed quicker than a water snake in a swimming hole. From that time on, the member from Cottonwood Corners had just one interest in legislation: to know what bills were off color and vote against them. He didn't make a single speech or offer a resolution; but he could spot a crooked streak behind a bill as quick as he'd smell a taint in a batch of butter. That was enough for Bent. Whatever happened, one thing was sure: John would " vote right."

I don't know that he made any particular

profession of religion but he stood square on everything according to the gospel rule, without a shadow of turning.

Although he didn't give it out through the papers, he actually returned all passes and franks and he didn't ask for the appointment of a single committee clerk or assistant janitor. All he did was to "vote right," and he came back again for three terms.

I used to sit there and envy the man from Cottonwood, who had no sails to trim, no measures to push, no backs to scratch.

One day I pointed him out to you and said: "There's about the only 'real man' here."

You know I've kept my "hands clean," Ned, but like the boy in the story, I've had to bandage them and tie them to the bedpost a good many times to do it. And when it comes to trimming sails—well, I have a training that would fit me for Commodore on a Cup Challenger.

But it's all over now! I'm going to bow the knee to no living person excepting the wife

and the house servants. The rest of the world will get its toes tramped on whenever the humor takes me.

And you can put it down on the title page, old boy, that hereafter I'm going to pay the freight—and pay it in hard money! No more "existence by courtesy" for me!

Some time, perhaps, you'll come out from among them, too, and be separate, return your passes and taste the joy of being able to pay for what you get—like the men who sign the passes and put up the campaign funds.

But if you're determined to play the game to the finish, you know you can count on me for any side-lights I can give. Unless you get out voluntarily, I want to see you win out; and every forward step in your career will give me as much pleasure as it will you. I guess I don't need to say that, do I, Ned?

By the way, are you still keeping company with Kate Hamming? or have you switched to the young widow? From some of the let-

ters that come to the wife, I figure that politics isn't the only game that interests you. Come now, 'fess up and make a clean breast of it!

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

PARABLE OF THE WIDOW'S MITE.

In which the retired politician writes to his younger friend Ned, who is still in the political harness, giving a few practical pointers on the game of "Legislative Poker," otherwise known as graft.

CHAPTER II.

PARABLE OF THE WIDOW'S MITE.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

I see by the papers that things are doing in the franchise line at the legislature, this Winter, and that you stand a good chance of lifting the mortgage off your place if you practice a little statesmanlike economy.

But, as you never were any good at Legislative Poker, I conclude that it may strike you as a little late to come into the game, now.

However, if you should be tempted to take a hand, let me give you the tip to remember the modern Parable of the Widow's Mite and keep in mind that this is the great day of Consolidation. Both these observations point the same moral: "A bribe in the hand is worth two in the safe-deposit vault—to which the other fellow holds the key!"

Probably you have forgotten the little episode of the Widow's Mite. It happened that

Winter when the Red School House issue left you at home, along with several other rural statesmen, to fodder the stock and reflect on the heartless ingratitude of the average country constituency.

Up to that time every corporation tub had stood on its own bottom and the "attorney" of each franchise grabbing scheme had settled his own score in his own way. But at the opening of that session the lobbyists were thicker than rabbits in a tree-nursery and the boys had their pockets enlarged to the size of meal sacks in order to take care of the prospective shake-down.

They had just begun to get out their clubs—in the shape of bills to regulate the powers and emoluments of the various corporations, when a hatchet-faced lawyer, with a Highland Scotch burr in his speech, entered his appearance and made a quick round-up of the representatives of the corporate interests and vested rights of the state. He wouldn't so much as whistle a psalm-tune on Sunday, but he could dispose

A hatchet-faced lawyer with a Highland Scotch burr in his speech, rounded up the Representatives.

of more smooth business on week days than an axle-grease factory.

It was said that the Gas Company had brought him on from New York to put through the consolidation bill. Anyhow, he took to the Consolidation Idea easier than his ancestors did to golf and Scotch Whiskey.

The morning after the Lairds of the Lobby had met in his room, the word was passed down the line, among the boys, that things were going to be done on a brand new basis; that the great Consolidation Idea was the order of the day and that it was a Good Thing.

Then the fellows who were running things in both houses were told to get together on the close-communion basis and be ready to take care of all business bearing the consolidation tag that came along.

Old Hi' in the Senate and Little Danny in the House gave it out that everything was fixed and that every man who climbed into the band wagon would get his proper share of the great consolidation water melon—and that it

was to be the biggest ever set up in the history of legislation.

This time, so they told the boys, things were going to be handled so slick that there weren't going to be any stray seeds scattered around to make talk on the part of pestering reformers and newspapers. For this reason the melon was going to be put away on ice until the close of the session—when it would be carved the week after adjournment.

Little Danny was appointed custodian of the melon fund, and he passed out the word that he had it put away snug and tight.

Every man knew the size of the piece he was to get at the end of the session, and all stood pat on the agreement and delivered the goods on roll call, without flinching.

Day after day little Danny grew thinner and yellower. But he kept up on whiskey, increasing the dose as the session drew to a close. In the last days he was as shaky as a new-born calf; but he hung on like grim death and kept the boys in close line.

Of course most of the loaded bills were

rushed through with a whoop in the last week of night sessions, and mighty few of the members wasted much time in sleep. So, when the whole thing was over, all agreed to go home and rest up for three days before dividing the spoils. Then they were to meet in the city, in Little Danny's office, and carve that melon.

But, the second morning after adjournment, the Honorables of the state were jolted out of bed by the news that Little Danny had dropped dead in his own home.

His funeral looked like a joint session of the House and Senate, and there were more statesmen among the mourners of Little Danny than ever will be got together again outside the cover of a capitol dome.

For the next few weeks the black-eyed widow of Little Danny held a continuous reception. Finally she closed the house and retreated to her father's home up in The Patch, three miles away from a railroad, in a back township. But the tide of emigration, on free passes, followed her, and more distinguished

statesmen got off at that little jerkwater station while she was there than had ever been in the county before.

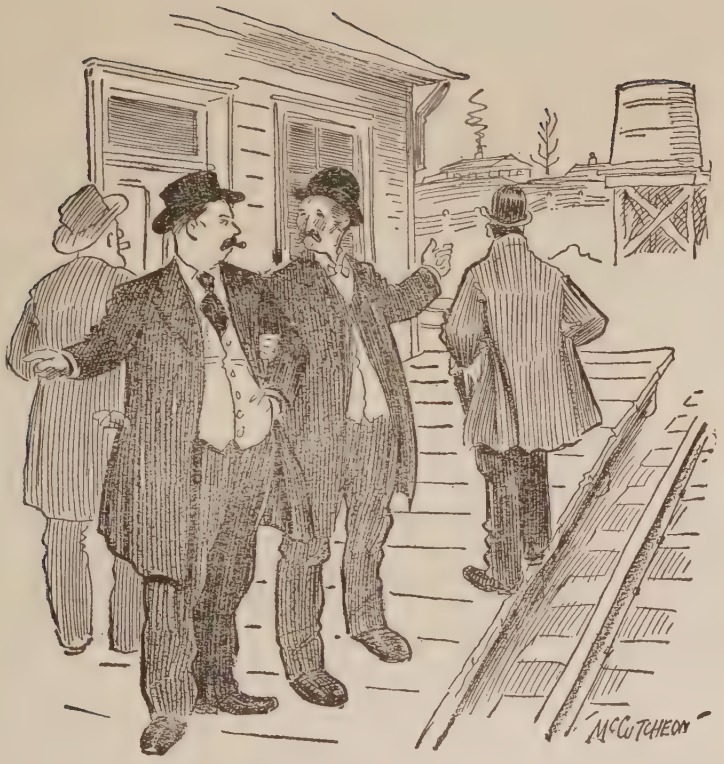
She broke all the records of widowhood on the score of delicate attentions from men who were entitled to write Honorable in front of their names.

When one legislator met another he grinned sheepishly and asked:

"Seen the widow?" or "What's the news from the Lady in Black?"

Finally, it filtered along down the line that Mrs. Danny had found a key in the trousers of the deceased and that in the safe deposit box which it fitted she had discovered a hundred thousand dollars. Danny had often told her, she said, that he had made some good investments and a lucky strike or two on the stock market and had salted down a snug sum.

While she coyly admitted that she was a little surprised at the size of the pile that Danny had saved, she was not wholly unprepared for the shock. It was only his quiet way of providing for his family! In fact he had, in



More statesmen got off at that little jerk-water station than had ever been in the county before.

almost his last words, told her, she said, that she'd find enough to keep the wolf from the door after he was gone.

At last the anxious attendants upon the demure and tearful little widow held a grand pow-wow to see what was to be done.

The first item of regular business transacted at the meeting was to formulate a water-proof lie for the widow's benefit, to the effect that Danny had been the custodian of a pool fund with which he had speculated successfully and that the money in the safe deposit vault represented the principal and profits of the venture in which all were to share.

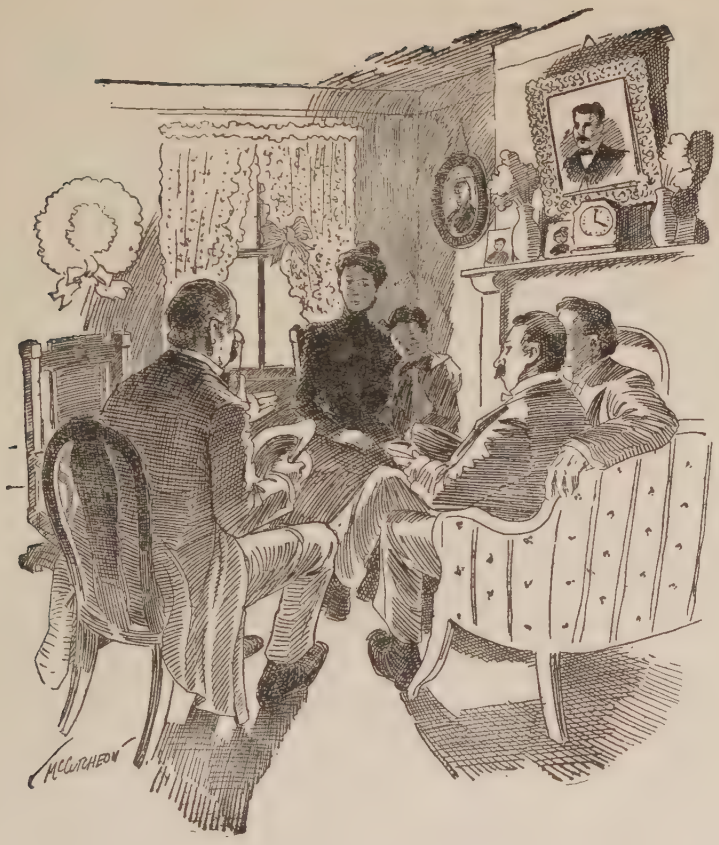
All agreed to this except one young man. He stood out. Then some one happened to get a hunch that he was the only unmarried man in the combination. It was plain that he had intentions on the widow and planned to copper the whole pile by a matrimonial coup. The rest of the gang made short work of him. They found out that he was engaged to a girl in his district. Then they called him into open meeting and gave him just a week in which to

get out the invitations—told him that if he didn't make good at the altar on schedule time the young lady would get a round-robin, or something of that sort, giving him a character that would last the rest of his life.

He came to taw quick, but inferred that he should expect to be handsomely remembered by his friends on the happy occasion. And he was. He received enough pickle castors, web-footed cake forks, spoons and table ware to stock the best jewelry store the little town had ever seen—and he opened business right away after the honeymoon. The other fellows thought they had done something mighty slick.

Then a committee of three legislators waited on the widow. They thought she'd cry and then compromise, for she was too wise not to know what Danny had been up to. But she didn't. She simply stood pat—told them she'd fight their claim to finish in open court. That settled it. The boys swallowed their grief, cursed the great Consolidation Scheme and threw up the sponge.

From that time the relict of Little Danny



A committee of three legislators waited on Little Danny's widow.

was the most offensively cheerful widow in ten states—especially whenever she happened to meet any of his old comrades of the session.

So you see, Ned, that the old C. O. D. plan is the only safe one. If the modern siren of Consolidation tempts you, remember the parable of the Widow's Mite and stand out.

Seriously, old man, wouldn't it be a revelation to the dear Trustful People if they could trepan a legislature and see what's going on under the skull of their Honorable Representatives? Just to uncover the real "works" and watch the secret wheels of legislation go round for the last days of a session would make them throw bricks at every state house in the country and put up signs over every Senate and House reading: "This place has changed hands!"

Things weren't so bad when we started in—and thank God I got out of it before the boodle disease became universally epidemic! I couldn't look my old dog Bluff in the eye if I'd been mixed up in that sort of mess, Ned, and I'd rather catch my son stealing scab sheep

than see him elected to a legislature. And that's honest, too!

In the course of time I hope to live down the fact that I once held a seat in the lower House, back in the old state. But I'll have to raise a good many chickens and fancy cattle out here on the ranch before I'll quite get the taste out of my mouth!

Write when you get time and let me know if you're still in the strait and narrow path.

You'll be less lonesome for writing if you are hanging to the old-fashioned notions of square politics with which we started in.

I see that you are inclined to hedge in answering my question regarding Kate and the widow. To my mind that's as good as a frank confession that the young widow is in the lead, for there's nothing that quite equals a blooming young widow, in a heart-to-heart campaign, excepting a younger and handsomer widow. I shall expect to hear something from you besides glittering generalities on this score. Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

A MILLION DOLLAR BRIBE.

Wherein William Bradley offers Ned his ideas of the kind of moral backbone that is entitled to flowers, speaks his mind on the subject of official temptations and tells how "Old Cal" Peavey acquitted himself under the offer of a million dollar bribe.

CHAPTER III.

A MILLION DOLLAR BRIBE.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

No doubt the new Governor is all of the moral athlete you set him up to be; but somehow I can't quite go into spasms of enthusiasm over the chief executive of a great state who allows his friends to cackle like a bevy of Shanghai pullets simply because he has managed to turn down a temptation that a Chicago alderman would scorn. Of course it was a very virtuous performance on the Governor's part; but he would pull heavier on my admiration if he hadn't allowed you fellows to draw the inference that he had felt any temptation to be resisted.

When a man admits to himself that he is tempted he marks down his own moral backbone about twenty per cent.; and when he brags that he didn't yield to the temptation he unconsciously puts himself on the bargain

counter and classes himself along with the unsold goods in stock. At least that's the way a good many discriminating people, who have had their eye-teeth cut, are inclined to look at the matter.

In all my recollection, I can recall just one man who could afford to admit, without cheapening his own character, that he was subjected to a downright temptation—but he didn't admit it! And when the story leaked out, after his death, there wasn't a man in the state who didn't take off his hat to the moral stamina that the Governor had shown. That little incident made the eulogies of the pulpits and the newspapers look cheap.

It happened while you were kicking a pigskin at Princeton. There never was a better campaign than the one in which Uncle Cal. Peavey knocked out the machine and landed in the Governor's chair. It made a bigger rumpus than a fox in a henhouse, and there was a mighty shaking of dry bones in the fat places on the pay-roll.

Almost the whole press of the state was

against him and he was hounded as an anarchist, a calamity-howler and a general enemy to society, capital, vested rights and a whole lot of other sacred and civilized things. But Cal. kept his nerve and continued to talk right out in meeting. The harder they pounded, the more he showed his teeth and stuck out his bristles.

That was the Winter before the United Traction's franchise expired, and a new charter was simply a groundhog case.

Times were tighter than a February freeze. Every cent that the Governor had made in a series of nervy speculations in city real estate had been put into the big Empire Building, just before the hard times set in. Tenants were scarcer than rats, rents fell like snowflakes, and the old man was in the hole for twice what he was worth, with big payments coming due in the course of the Winter. He didn't know which way to turn, as the money market froze tighter and tighter, and it was a certainty that he stood to lose the fortune he had made in years of hard hustling, unless some unexpected

stroke of Providence should come to his relief.

But he was made of stern stuff and never gave out a whimper, although he couldn't keep his condition from the wise ones on the street.

Just as he was driving ahead to the last ditch in his private affairs, the United Traction was making hay at the session. The Governor wasn't the only man in politics that Winter who had been caught in the financial squeeze. Plenty of the legislators were worrying over mortgages and investments—a fact that didn't escape the attention of the Traction Company's lobby agents.

Although the Governor and his forces put up a strong and crafty fight against the bill, the franchise measure passed both houses by a big majority—and the men who held mortgages on the assets of the members concerned stopped worrying about payments.

Then the calcium light was suddenly shifted to the Executive Mansion, and the question in every mouth was: "What will the Governor do?" The situation was strained up to con-

cert pitch and there were all sorts of speculation as to the course which Uncle Cal. would pursue. Generally, however, it was agreed that there were enough votes to pass the bill over his veto and that probably, as a sensible man who knew enough to know when he was licked, he would let the measure become a law without his signature. This was considered the proper way for a Governor to surrender under protest when there were not enough votes at his command to sustain his veto.

A day or two after the bill had gone up to the Governor, one of the smoothest mechanics in the fine art of "fixing" ever on the confidential pay roll of the Traction Company dropped in at the office of the Empire building for a little chat with Mike Boylan, the Governor's business partner and general handyman.

Now Mike had knocked about town a good deal, been up as late as midnight several times and was fairly well acquainted with the landscape in the neighborhood of the City Hall; but for all that he didn't really know that his

caller was a scout for the Traction Company. In other words, the fellow was the man for the hour; he had just enough shady reputation to arouse in Mike's mind a suspicion of his connection with the company and save awkward explanations. On the other hand, he had not made himself common so that his name was known to the members of the gang generally. In short, he was an artist and accepted about one commission in four or five years, but made that one something handsome.

"Mike," he finally said, after they had chatted awhile, "if you're not too busy I'd like you to do me a little favor."

"Certainly," responded Mike.

"I'd like you to introduce me to the man in charge of the safety deposit vaults of your building. I want to get the right sort of accommodations, and if you take me in tow it'll insure me proper attention from the general-in-command down there in the basement."

"Sure, I'll fix that," said Mike, taking his hat and wondering if it really were true that

his caller was mixed up with the traction people, as he had heard.

They were starting away from the largest wall-safe or "box" when the new patron of the institution called Mike into one of the private stalls. On the table were two good, fat telescopes.

Up to that time Mike had been merely an interested spectator; but this move gave him a jolt. Could it be that the fellow had trapped him into a position that might be made to reflect on the Governor if it should ever get out?

Mike's conscience had been trained in the kindergarten of the street-paving contract business and never swung a danger signal short of the question "Will it get out?" Nothing but that possibility presented a moral problem to him. The next semaphore which was swung by his acute spiritual sensibilities operated on the question of whether or not a certain course would bring him under the heel of the law.

"If this chap makes a straight proposition," reasoned Mike, as his companion was unstrapping the telescopes, "and it should ever get to

the Governor's ears, it'll be all day with me. He'll raise my scalp."

" I hope you'll not think I'm suspicious of the boys down here," said the caller, " but I'm taking care of a whole lot of cash for a pool I'm interested in; the fellows who are with me are afraid of banks in these times and insist on planting our funds in a safe-deposit vault. That puts the whole thing on my shoulders and it occurred to me that it would be a safe precaution to ask you to come down here and check up with me the amount I'm planting—it won't take but a minute."

" You chaps going to make books on the races? " laughed Mike.

His answer was a knowing wink and Mike heaved a sigh of relief at the thought that he was well out of a disagreeable scrape in which a quarrel with the Governor was almost a moral certainty—and Mike was more afraid of old Cal. than of any other being in the whole universe. In fact the Governor had become a sort of god to Mike, although Cal. didn't know it himself.

Mike's eyes stood out of his head as he figured up his tab: One Million Dollars!

Half the packages were in thousand-dollar bills and the rest in five hundreds, so it was an easy job to check them up, according to the figures on the paper bands pinned about the packages. Mike's eyes fairly stood out of his head as he looked from the figures on his tab to the currency on the table. One million dollars! He had never seen that much money in one heap before in his life, and his nimble, acquisitive mind began right away to figure out the things that could be done with that money. It almost stupefied him and he made no objection when asked to help stack it away in the big wall-safe.

Then they started upstairs and the caller suddenly remembered that he had left his umbrella in Mike's private office. He got it, and started for the door, then stopped and began to draw on his gloves. Mike had not yet come out of his trance. He was still saying to himself: "A million dollars!"

"You're satisfied as to the amount in the vault?" casually inquired the caller.

"Yes;" absently responded Mike, writing the figures on the desk blotter.

Suddenly the key to the big deposit drawer fell on the desk in front of him and he heard the words:

"Well—you know what to do with this!"

For a second he stared hard at it. Then he grabbed it up and made a plunge for the door and out into the hall. But his smooth caller had gone down the stairs to the floor below, taken the elevator which served the side entrance to the building and was gone!

From that time until Friday afternoon, when the Governor came to the city to give two or three days to his private affairs, Mike scoured the town for a trace of the man who had dumped a million dollars of bribe money into his hands. And in that time he felt more stings of conscience than he had ever known in all his life before. He was the worst scared man in the city and it seemed to him he'd rather jump into the crater of a volcano than face the wrath of the Governor.

Or could it be that, under the certainty of

complete financial ruin the old man was facing, he might possibly weaken? And why shouldn't he take the money? He would be doing nothing for it—not so much as signing his name! Hadn't the Governor fought the bill tooth-and-nail? And wouldn't his failure to sign it be a protest against it? This was just what the Party and the public expected him to do; then why shouldn't he keep the money that had been thrown at him?—and without a possible tracer attached!

But even Mike's moral obtuseness was not so great that he didn't recoil from the possibility that the Governor might look at the matter in this way. If it should be so, he would know that there wasn't a man on earth who couldn't be reached if all the circumstances were right.

When the Governor came in Mike was looking uncommonly pale, but the old man was too preoccupied to notice it. His grizzled old face was as haggard as if he had just got up from a run of fever, and his eyes shone with a grim, unnatural brightness.

He slumped into a big leather chair and, in a shaky voice, said:

"Mike, it's all up! I stopped in at the Trust Company's office on my way from the station, and they say we can't have any more time. Then I went over to the other place and thrashed it out with fellows we hoped might come into the thing as a last resort. But they're scared, and nothing can move 'em to furnish the funds."

He choked up for a minute but finally continued:

"But there's one consolation. The property's worth the money, and no one'll lose a dollar. And there'll be no scandal attached. Thank God I never wronged a man out of a cent that I know of, but it's kind of tough to see the work of years swept away in a second! And then there's the little woman at home—that's the hardest part of it!"

Then Mike knew that it was up to him to make a clean breast of the safe-deposit business—and he did it, too.

The eyes of the old man seemed to bore Mike

"Young man", said the Governor, "I'd advise you to take better care of that scoundrel's money than you ever did of any other money in your life."

right through as the story came out in a shaky voice. For a minute or two, the old Governor sat with his chin resting in his hands, the muscles of his face twitching like a spider's legs.

But it was all over in a minute. Slowly rising to his feet, the old man pointed his long bony finger at Mike and in a voice that had the grit of iron in it, he said:

"Young man! I'd advise you to take better care of that damned scoundrel's money than you ever did of any money in your life."

That night the Governor wrote a veto message on the traction bill that fairly scorched the rails of the line. Then he called in the real scrappers of his political camp and began a fight against foregone defeat that ripped up the whole state and made history. He didn't stop at anything that came under the head of things "fair in love and war."

Before the fight was finished he was forced practically to kidnap two or three weak-kneed members of the opposition and take them out of the state. And there were a few others that

had to be given a close-range view of the penitentiary before they experienced a change of heart. But when the vote on the veto was taken the old Governor won out by three votes —and he celebrated the triumph by surrendering to his creditors and backers all the property that he had accumulated in fifty years of harder work than a stone-breaker ever put in.

In less than a year from that time I acted as a pall-bearer at Calvin Peavey's funeral and joined in a subscription to buy the widow a home.

That's the sort of moral backbone that is entitled to flowers, according to my notion. And there isn't much of anything short of that brand that is. When I go into hero-worship I'm going to cap my shrine with a bust of honest old Cal.

But I've run on to such a length about this temptation business that you'll veto this letter without reading if I don't quit short off.

The cattle are looking fine and I'm getting young and frisky, now that I don't have to keep a gang of office-seekers in good humor or steer

the ship of state between the rocks of party politics. There's nothing to put ginger into a man quite up to the liberty of speaking his mind without figuring on how it's going to affect the vote.

Yours ever,

William Bradley.

POLITICAL SPANKS AND SPANKERS.

Replying to Ned's letter proposing to follow up one "reform victory" with another bill to "purify the state" by legislative enactment, the old Governor frees his mind on the subject of world-spankers and says a few pointed things regarding professional reformers, that are illuminated by two pertinent stories.

CHAPTER IV.

POLITICAL SPANKS AND SPANKERS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

My Dear Ned:—

After you've shot your rocket don't play with the stick. Start something new. Even the importunate widow of the parable had the good grace to let up after she'd landed what she was after. And it's mighty risky for politicians to rush in where widows fear to tread.

Your little reform game was all well enough and came out a lot better than most schemes to spank the world "by statute made and provided." Of course, we've got to have corrective legislation, but three feet of holdback strap, taken on emergency from the nearest fill of the family buggy and applied at the nerve center of my youthful conscience, did more to make me a good citizen than all the statutes in all the books of the Law since the days of Moses or the Medes and Persians.

And now that you open the way, I'd like to offer a few remarks on the subject of political spanks and spankers. Your notion that you have a divine call to keep everlastingly at the reform work puts you on a par with most other spankers. Mighty few of them know when to begin, and not one in a thousand has sense enough to quit at just the right point. This spanking business is a good deal like tempering steel—the whole trick's in knowing the right minute for cooling off.

When my father used to start in with the buggy strap I was powerful proud and cocky; I knew that I was in the right. But as things continued to warm up, my feelings always reached a point of complete humility. I was licked and I knew it. And what was more, I knew that I ought to be licked. I " conceded everything to the opposition " and was willing to come back into the party fold without asking for any representation on the steering committee. If father had stopped right there he

would have had me in a state of total and unqualified surrender. But he didn't. He always kept right on with the reform business, just as you seem bent on doing.

Gradually, on these painful occasions, my feelings underwent another change until I didn't care whether I was right or wrong. All I did care for was to get even with the power behind the strap. And generally about that time, I'd let out a yell loud enough to be heard by some of the neighbors. They usually did hear, too, and then the news would circulate that I'd been "shamefully whipped." That kind of sympathy made me swell up like a martyr and feel that I was the victim of the oppressor.

Now, Ned, the time to let up on spanking the community is at the humble point. When you keep on until the victim gets the secret sympathy of the neighbors and is able to pose as the object of persecution you're overdoing the job just a little. It's all right to be thor-

ough, but stop at a point where you can keep the moral support of the neighbors.

A good many reformers are like pointer pups—they don't get sense enough to work with until they're beyond the age at which a bird dog of any other breed ought to have become full of burrs and honors. I never see a reformer start in, full of his first run of political sap, without thinking of "Pug" Hansom. They called him that because he looked as if part of his face had been left off and kind of squared up in the rough with a meat ax, like a pug dog's.

He had bullyragged a fair sized fortune out of the manufacturing business before he was 35. Then he concluded that he would cover himself with glory by larruping the world into a state of political righteousness. He was willing to start in a small way, just for practice, on his own city of more than a million inhabitants. After he had cleaned that up he would begin on the real job and show the

"Pug" Hansom went into political work to save himself from ingrowing patriotism.

world what he could do when once he got his hand in.

Just then a new man was reaching for a foothold on the party ladder and was doing a clever stunt in the shape of organizing young men's clubs. When the young world spanker came to him asking for work, just to save himself from ingrowing patriotism, the request was granted. The General Overseer said:

"You organize a dozen clubs in your part of town, get them right where you can change them from a singlefoot to a canter at the turn of your hand, and then you'll have political capital to do business with that'll start you on a real career."

From that time until he was all in, this young reformer was busier than a cock partridge on a drumming log—and he strutted around in about the same style, too. I've never seen anything quite so important of its age as that young chap. But he was a hustler and he went at the organization of young

men's clubs in his neck of the woods in the same way that he had invaded a competitor's territory and put in his own goods.

According to his report to the General Organizer, " the work " was coming on in great shape; the petitions were signed upon sight, and there was enough party enthusiasm aroused by his oratory to drive a sawmill with lath and shingle machines to boot. On the surface everything looked all right to the General Organizer and he had about concluded that he had picked a winner when the great night of the actual organization and election of officers came on.

There was no doubt about enthusiasm or activity. Every young man in the party under 80 years of age was there and doing business. When the ceremony of electing officers was over the young reformer was so hypnotized by the applause that greeted his oratory that he actually didn't recognize the fact that the enemy had come in like a flood and swept all his work right into the opposition camp. He wasn't a high private in the organization

that he had built up—and he didn't realize it until the General Organizer heard of the news and explained it to him with a diagram.

Some of these little things are calculated to give a real politician the feeling that it's about as sensible to hunt prairie chickens with a hound pup as to go after votes with a reformer who wants to make the party into one large bible class, with himself as teacher and substitute.

I notice that lately you have been sending up quite a few fireworks directed at the bosses of your party. What's the matter, Ned? You haven't been trying to get frisky with the old crowd of fellows and ring in new rules on the boys without giving due notice, have you? When I hear that kind of talk from a man who has been in the political game as long as you have and has as much horse sense as you usually carry about, I can't help suspecting that something like this has happened.

It's all right to put up a howl against the boss, but the outcry would be a whole lot more convincing if it did not come from a throat

that has sung in his choir since it was organized. There has been more nonsense talked on both sides of the boss question than on the tariff and free silver combined. I guess that I have said enough to indicate that, to my notion, a reformer isn't to be accepted as having a divine call simply because he can pound the pulpit and shout loud enough to start the nails in the mourners' benches. I look at it about this way:

A boss is frequently a reformer who has finally grown up, got on to the rules of the game and is willing to play it square. And the professional reformer is often only an appetite for power that mistakes itself for moral courage.

Since cutting my eye teeth I have had a good chance to learn considerable about how a reformer can grow up into a boss, and how a boss can get cocky and exceed his privileges. One experience has shed a good deal of light on the subject for me, so I give it to you for what it's worth.

It was the second year after I came back

to the city. A young married man out in the newer section of the town saw that certain things in his line of trade ought to be protected by stricter laws.. He kept the drug and school book store right next to the schoolhouse.

When he asked the local boss for representation on the ward committee and for some other reasonable things that would help him to make a strong fight for his reform legislation he was turned down.

He was green in politics, but you didn't have to tell him a thing but once—and sometimes not at all. Because his was the only drug store in the region and was close to the schoolhouse, he knew practically every man, woman, and child in the ward. When the smoke cleared away from the primaries this little druggist had fourteen of the delegates to the county convention and the local boss had one.

That night the druggist didn't feel sleepy, and so he managed to see the fellows who were doing things on his side of the river.

He was just as easy and modest in his way as if he'd never thought of going out after a little reform legislation. Somehow the boys who held the whip hand took a shine to him and concluded that he'd play square. Then they were so tickled over the way he had drubbed the boss that they fell right in with his plan for doing things in the convention.

When he walked into the room where the "Big Three" slate makers were figuring out things he was abruptly asked: "How many delegates have you?"

"One hundred and thirteen," he answered.

"No; how many delegates do you control? We're not asking how many there are on your side of the river," was the impatient return.

"I control 113—all there are on my side of the creek, just as I said. We all got together last night, and I'm sent up here to treat with you and find out just what can be done."

"Done!" exclaimed one of the veteran bosses. "Why, we can simply control that whole convention without another vote. Now, what do you want, young man?"

Little Doc walked into the room where the Big Three slate-makers were figuring out things.

He told them precisely what things on the ticket would have to go to his side of the river, and he capped the whole business by demanding that his men must be nominated first.

"Because," he explained, "you see, this game is all new to me, and I can't take the chances that you old hands can."

Right then one of the big leaders looked up and said:

"I thought that you were just a reformer —but, by mighty! you're a boss, and a real boss, too."

From that time to this the little druggist has played a gentleman's game and played it on the square. Some folks don't approve of games at all, and others don't like that kind of a game, but all are agreed that the way to play it is according to the rules.

So, Ned, if you're going to cast your lot with the world spankers, just try and be as decent and square with your political partners as you have been while just a plain politician, playing the game for the fun of it and because you like it better than golf, poker, pingpong,

or pinochle. If you do this you're likely some time to break your chrysalis, " leave your low vaulted past," and find that you have changed from a professional political spanker to a boss whose word is good to the limit of the game with all who know how to play it.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

A WOMAN IN IT.

Responding to Ned's confession that he has become engaged to Kate Hamming and feels that a wife will have a "great influence on his career," William Bradley tells the story of one good woman's tragic influence in the life of a young politician—and points the conclusion that one guess is as good as another in a political situation with a woman in it.

CHAPTER V.

A WOMAN IN IT.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

And so you've decided to take unto yourself a wife in the person of Kate Haming? Good! That part of the departure isn't open to debate. And neither is your observation that you feel your wife will have a "decided influence" on your political career. But no being short of the Almighty is able to give anything like a safe guess on whether that influence will be of the sort you are counting on. This is one of the things as inscrutable as the mystery of godliness.

Any fair sample of common American womanhood is a prize package for a bachelor politician to draw; but when it comes to the question of her influence on his career, one guess is as good as another. And this uncertainty isn't a matter of the particular kind of feminine loveliness that the woman in the case

happens to represent. She may be as attractive as a lost bargain and as tactful as brook trout and still manage to warp your political destiny until it cracks.

I never see a young politician push his head into the matrimonial lariat without thinking of young Flournoy, one of the first speakers out here after the territory became a state. His story shows how a woman's presence in the background of a politician's life can change the whole face of the landscape.

When the Almighty put the finishing touches to young Flournoy's makeup and hitched him up for life's heat, He checked him high. You remember that thoroughbred Kentucky colt I used to drive the first year I occupied the Executive Mansion? Head up, ears forward, set on a hair trigger and ready to shy at a butterfly, and so sensitive that a harsh word would throw her into the dumps for a whole day? If I had that little mare now I'd call her Flournoy.

The young man was as proud as a girl with her first long skirt and as ambitious as Lu-

Young Flournoy spruced up amazingly, but worshipped at a distance.

cifer. He had a good ranch and kept severely to himself until a little school teacher with snappy gray eyes, dimples, and a cleft chin came from New York to teach district No. 10. I never saw a bucket of water bring a gopher out of his hole quicker than that mite of a schoolmarm brought Flournoy out of his shell! He spruced up amazingly, and never passed the schoolhouse or the place where she boarded without wearing clothes that would have graced a wedding.

Right at the start the young man got it into his head that Miss Dove was made of superior clay and that her blood was bluer than a royal whetstone. It never occurred to him for an instant that a good, clean, young chap like himself was worthy to come into her presence or could be of the slightest possible interest to her unless he could do some knightly stunt that would specially entitle him to her condescension. There's no doubt that the girl was so dead lonesome and homesick that she would have given her shoes for the companionship of a man like Flournoy, and would have

primped in front of the glass for an hour if she had been given any reason to suspect that he might call.

But the young rancher continued to adore at a distance and to lie awake nights scheming about how he could distinguish himself in her eyes.

There wasn't much doing in the way of opportunity for old fashioned heroics just then and there. The prairies refused to burn, tramps kept shy of the country for fear of being set to work, not a dog went mad, no villain offered insult to the little school teacher, and altogether there wasn't the slightest chance for her knight to rush in and rescue her from insult or peril.

Perhaps you think Flournoy didn't figure on any of these things. That's because you never saw him. One glance into his big black eyes was like reading a whole historical romance at a gulp. You may take my word for it that there wasn't a dramatic possibility that this adoring lover hadn't figured on. He saw the whole situation through age-of-chiv-

alry eyes, and all he needed to fit him for a knight was a little scrap-iron clothing and a good deal of bad language.

But in the absence of any better field of valor, he decided to take to politics. We've been told, until we're tired of it, that "all the world loves a lover," but it's gospel truth just the same—and when Flournoy intimated to the boss of his district that he wanted to go to the House the old Platt-in-overalls decided that for once he'd indulge the luxury of a little sentiment. So he put the thing through and landed Flournoy on the ticket. The opposition was mighty strong that year, and if it hadn't been for the quiet way in which the boss put forward what the literary critics call the "romance element," his candidate certainly would have been skinned at the polls. But the love affair caught the fancy of all the old boys and some of the young ones, and Flournoy found himself elected, addressed as "honorable," and petted by the whole community.

Before the smell of the fireworks celebrat-

ing his election had been blown out of the main street of Bullseye, Flournoy began to receive telegrams and delegations from the various factions fighting for control of the House. He was just wise enough to play safety and not tie up with any particular crowd, but he was kept so busy returning the evasive answer that he didn't have a chance to call on the little school teacher and throw his future at her feet. In fact, the night when he had put on his best garments and his statesman's smile and was walking the floor in a mild effort to screw up his courage for a call on her, a male siren from another district dropped in and delicately intimated that stranger things had happened than the selection of Robert Flournoy as speaker of the House. And when the political siren closed his dark-horse song he left a book of parliamentary rules for young Flournoy's perusal and inspiration.

The poison worked so swiftly that instead of treading the cottonwood lane that led to Squire Baldwin's house, where the school teacher boarded, as he had intended, Flour-

noy sat straddle of a kitchen chair, his head resting on its back, and his mind working on the splendid possibilities ahead. It didn't take him long to figure that if a membership in the House was a strong card to play in his suit for the hand of the school teacher the speakership would be a royal flush. If the stake had been his own life he couldn't have been in more deadly earnest, so he concluded to wait a bit and make a try for the speakership before he showed his hand.

Consequently, he sent his love affair into committee for future report and struck out for the capital. There he found things split up into three bunches, with party lines lost in the scramble for power. The regulars and the insurgents were evenly divided and three hungry scouts held the balance of power. The scouts stood out until the last minute before the formal opening of the House, and it looked as if the deadlock might be good for half the life of the session.

But just then the hatchet-faced old warhorse of the Insurgents, who had whispered

the siren song to Flournoy, took a grip on the situation and showed that he could spell organization with a big "O." He had an under jaw like the lower blade of a rolling mill shears, the sort that snips off steel rails as easy as a small boy bites stick candy. And his eyes had about as much of the glow of human kindness as the points of two diamond drills. "Old Jawbone," as the boys called him, was a seasoned terrier, who had been waiting for years to set his teeth into a "good thing." He saw his chance and made a lunge for it.

Suddenly, out of the chaos of things, came the word that he had whipped the three scouts into line and with their votes the Insurgents would put young Flournoy into the speaker's chair. And they did it, too, in short order, after the state patronage had been parceled out to meet the demands of the scouts.

Probably no speaker ever carried into the big chair at the head of a state House of Representatives a happier heart that Flournoy's. He fairly perspired beads of joy. A kitten with a dozen balls of yarn would have made

a solemn spectacle alongside the young speaker. And a kitten presiding over a pack of timber wolves would have been an example of the eternal fitness of things compared with young Flournoy as the ruling officer of that House. He had no more idea of the nature of his job and the powers that were playing with him than a cock sparrow caught in a cyclone has of the thing he is up against.

It meant just one thing to Flournoy—the girl! Beyond her he saw nothing, knew nothing, cared nothing. His sudden political honors were only trophies to be flung at her feet.

Just before adjournment at the close of the first week he wrote Miss Lucy Dove, asking if he might take the liberty of calling upon her Saturday evening. And he didn't lose sight of the probability that she would be duly impressed by the imposing official stationery upon which his note was written.

Of course, just what he said to her that night, as they walked up and down between the two long rows of cottonwood in the light of the Autumn moon, isn't of record, except-

ing as it was written on his face when he showed up at the beginning of the week. One of the boys who was in his open secret read the speaker's face with the remark: "He's had his petition hung up in the hands of a friendly committee, with an intimation of speedy and favorable action."

Sometimes the whole front of his countenance was hung with the bunting of assured hope, only to be changed in the space of an hour to the dark draperies of threatening despair. But the game that was put up to him in the course of the week was swifter than anything he had ever thought of, and, together with the worry about the young woman, it wore him to a frazzle.

But at last the members adjourned for another Sunday at home, and he packed his grip and made for Bullseye on the first train. The sight of young Flournoy's face when he returned was something to warm the heart of a cobblestone. Even "Old Jawbone" actually thawed for an instant under the radiance of it. The wedding card was spread on Flour-

Old Jawbone laid down the lines of the gang program to the "Boy Speaker."

noy's countenance in plainer terms than on the engraved announcements that were opened by the members. He had won the heart of the little school teacher as suddenly as he had landed the speakership. There was an irrepressible "young Lochinvar" look in his eye, and he rapped his gavel with a new ring of confidence.

"Old Jawbone" figured that the right minute had come to spring his biggest game on the "boy speaker," as he sometimes called Flournoy when talking with the "gray wolves" of the Insurgent gang. Consequently, he had a private conference with the knight of the chair, and laid out the lines of the gang program. And the layout was as rotten and high handed a deal as was ever put up by a bunch of Black Hills road agents.

There wasn't any more duplicity in Flournoy's composition than in an antelope's, and he shied openly at the proposition. Then the under jaw of the Insurgent chief set tight and sudden, and he said: "Give me your last word on this tomorrow noon."

If Flournoy intended to take his bride into his confidence on the matter he changed his mind and fought it out inside himself. Probably he was ashamed to show her what a dirty mess was being brewed among the men who belonged to his political camp. But he knew, all right, what the thing would look like in her eyes, and that was enough for him. He stood by the white plummet line of her conscience, as he saw it, and prepared to abide by the results.

Although he recognized that he was up against the biggest bout he had encountered since he had gone into the knighthood business, he had as little conception of what could happen to him as a baby left on a railroad track.

That noon, after he had kissed his wife a dozen times and received her promise that she would come to the House in the course of the afternoon, he cinched up his armor and went into the speaker's private room, ready for the joust with the Hon. " Jawbone." And he had it hot, too! A member passing the door over-

heard the voice of the "boy speaker" declaring: "Sir, you're a contemptible scoundrel —a disgrace to your state and your race! I'd rather die than do the infamous thing you demand." And as the eavesdropping member belonged to the Insurgent gang, he told this snatch of stolen conversation as a good joke. In five minutes everybody in the House knew that the war was on.

"Old Jawbone's" face was the color of stale liver when he came out into the open—and the speaker's as white as a sheet. Flournoy's legs faltered as he climbed the stairs to his chair and watched "Old Jawbone" scurrying to the seats of the faithful, like a pirate passing orders for the scuttling of a ship.

Suddenly the lieutenant of the Insurgents arose and received the recognition of the chair. With a sperm-oil smile on his face he slowly and calmly moved the adoption of a resolution deposing the speaker on the ground of "gross incompetency."

"Shame!" "Outrage!" came the cries from the Regulars—and in the next minute

the word went down the line from their leader to vote for the retention of the man who had been seated by their opponents. For the next few minutes things centered about the three scouts. As the young speaker stood there, dumbly holding on to his desk, a dazed, wild look in his eyes, the clerk put the motion in a foghorn voice. At that instant a smiling usher appeared in the doorway beside the speaker's platform, followed by three women. They stopped suddenly. The speaker's chalky face turned in their direction just long enough for one glance. He quivered for an instant, then dropped.

"The motion is carried," bellowed the clerk —but the scream of the woman who leaped up the stairs of the speaker's platform cut the uproar like a knife. It was a good thing that "Old Jawbone" had made himself scarce before the Regulars realized what had happened. They would have made short work of him just then!

When the young speaker was revived it was only to rave wildly about his wife—and she

A smiling usher appeared in the doorway followed by three women.

was about as stark mad as he. It was real tragedy with a vengeance. The strain had snapped the taut cord of Flournoy's mentality. He lasted a week—but never saw a sane minute. And if ever a broken heart looked out of a woman's face—like a lost soul—it looked from the face of the little school teacher, the Lady of the Lost Knight, as I have always called her.

And so, Ned, do you wonder I say you can't tell what is going to happen when a woman—no matter how fine and good—comes into the life of a man who is in the scramble of politics?

Yours ever, William Bradley.

HOW THE DEAR PEOPLE FORGET.

Ned has written his old friend and counsellor that the piece of legislation he has just put through will make him "eternally solid" with his constituents and that hereafter he has only to say "thumbs-up" and the whole party strength of the entire district will follow the word. William Bradley replies with the story of the boss of Pinhole politics who banked on the gratitude of the public and later saw a great light.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE DEAR PEOPLE FORGET.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

You seem to feel that the bill you have put through has given you a mechanic's lien for life on the franchises of your constituents. Perhaps it has. But let me tell you this: A boy who has played hookey and wound up with a secret raid on the jam closet, and is then called into the woodshed to interview father, is a novice in the gentle and convenient art of forgetting compared with the average political constituency. Any ordinary bunch of voters can forget to remember more things than a village money lender can remember to forget in making up a schedule of his personal property for the tax assessor. The affections of a frisky girl in her first year of boarding school life are sermons in constancy alongside of the fluctuations of popu-

lar esteem which are recorded at the ballot box.

Of course, the fellows who are pushing for the appropriation which you landed have told you that the passage of your bill would make you eternally solid with the horny handed voters in your district; that so long as grass continues to grow and water to run in the old Eighth you could just say "thumbs up" and the votes would be yours. Then they pounded you on the back, gave you a stag dinner, and presented you with a gold watch engraved with sentiments from your "grateful constituents." I've had several of these, and my experience is that they'll run longer without cleaning than most constituencies will without a change of heart.

This cow country out here hasn't any more than its share of quitters, but a little incident just occurred over at Pinhole that sheds light on the subject of the amount of faith a man is warranted in placing on the political con-

stancy of a constituency to which he has given the one thing that it desired above all others. Now, Pinhole isn't strong on the traditional means of grace; it's short on churches; the W. C. T. U. and Y. M. C. A. and other alphabetical agencies of civilization haven't been able to cut a wide swath there. But for all that, there is a good deal doing in Pinhole right along and the people have been accustomed to point with pride to the fact that its bars, faro banks, and other local institutions are the best in the state and never turn away the enterprising patron at any hour of day or night.

At the last session of the legislature, however, there was a tidal wave of moral sentiment that made the boys hold their ears to the rails and listen. A good many of them concluded that the "water wagon" was coming in earnest and they couldn't see much difference between a blue ribbon and a ballot. The W. C. T. U. forces certainly did make a powerful showing, and for a while it looked

as if some mighty restrictive legislation would go through. That was the time when "Big Mike," the member from Pinhole, took off his coat and began to saw wood. He knew that his town would look like a Sunday school after that kind of legislation had begun to get in its saving work. A big delegation of business men came on from Pinhole to make a showing. They were sure scared and begged Mike to turn back the enemy at any cost. He buckled right down to business, sacrificed everything else, and traded right and left for anything that would cut into the votes of the reform party. And he was a shrewd trader, too!

If the missionaries who have gone out to spread the gospel had worked half as hard as "Big Mike" there wouldn't be an unconverted heathen on the earth. If he had sworn not to eat or sleep until he had killed that bill he couldn't have hustled harder. Day and night he was on the rampage, cutting out a mem-

ber from the reform bunch at every possible opportunity and putting the Pinhole brand on him.

When the final roundup came he had picked up enough strays, by hard riding, to defeat the cold water measure. Judging by the noise that Pinhole delegation made over him, you would have expected to see "Big Mike" sent to congress. They loosened the underpinning of the capitol building and painted the town until it looked like a horse show poster. And the whole thing was done over again when Mike made his triumphal return to his own town. All the brass bands in the county were there and the blowout that was had in his honor went down in history.

A few months later a young stranger with a baritone speaking voice, a smile that made the dogs wag their tails, and a string of good stories, struck the town and opened a law office. When the municipal election came around the opposition ticket nominated him

for mayor. Then the "business element" waited on "Big Mike" and asked him to run in order to "save the day." They assured him that he was the one man who could snuff out the young invader without batting an eye.

Of course, being mayor of Pinhole looked like small potatoes to a man who had held the center of the stage through a whole legislative session and who had his eye on a seat in the State Senate. But the boys begged him to make the sacrifice and urged that the mere use of his name would put the other man out of the running. Finally he yielded. The music which had celebrated his triumphal return was still sounding in his ears and he looked upon the whole municipal campaign as a matter of form. In fact, he didn't consider it necessary even to remind the people that he had given them the one thing they wanted. They could never forget that! So he just kept on handing out hardware to his customers while the young lawyer worked his smile and his stories from one end of the street to the other.

Somehow, before anybody particularly realized it, there was a sort of general inquiry as to whether "Big Mike" ever would be able to satisfy his appetite for office. Even one or two of the men who had been in the Pinhole delegation that went up to the capital during the session for the purpose of holding up "Big Mike's" hands and giving him moral support were heard to insinuate that the political leader of the business element so hated to see an office get past him that he'd be running for justice of the peace or constable next, rather than have some other fellow fill the place.

Then the women and the dudes of Pinhole society began to whisper that it would be real nice to have a mayor who didn't spit on his shirt front and who used at least three handkerchiefs in a week.

Well, before the polls opened you could walk from one end of the street to the other without hearing a solitary word on the subject of how "Big Mike" had stampeded a whole legislature and saved Pinhole from being

crushed under the wheels of the water wagon bill. But every time you listened in at a little political talk you were dead sure to hear how many spots were once counted on "Big Mike's" shirt bosom and how tiresome a thing it is to see a man make a political glutton of himself.

"Big Mike" didn't hear much of this talk, and he simply snorted with complaisant contempt at the stray fragments of it that did reach his ears. He allowed that a man could wear a shirt front of solid plug fringed with fine-cut if he could only give his constituents their heart's desire and give it to 'em quick—when they called for it.

The people, he said, knew all about him, and he knew the people of Pinhole so well that he didn't have to get out and run a campaign with a dude on a shirt front issue. But a bear on a floor sanded with carpet tacks would be a calm and peaceful object compared with "Big Mike" when the ballots were counted that night and the election of the smooth young lawyer announced.

Big Mike plowed up both sides of the street in his wrath.

Mike plowed up both sides of the street in his wrath, sold out his business, and moved into another frontier town in an adjoining district, which had been as much benefited by his work in the legislature as had Pinhole. Then he started in for a long campaign. He is working at it now, day and night, and you may depend upon it that he will be back again in the legislature with a long knife out for any legislation that the Pinhole district may want. He says that he is now a reformer—and that the first thing he proposes to reform is the memory of his dear friends, the people of Pinhole.

All this, I admit, is discouraging to a man who has put up really a great fight for a good measure that ought to entitle him to an eternal mortgage on the support of his district for anything he may choose to ask. However, there may be a sneaking streak of satisfaction to some fellows in the fact that a constituency is about as quick to forget his sins and blunders as his triumphs of statesmanship in their behalf.

Perhaps you have forgotten the episode of "Gumshoe Smith," in the session when you were laid off. Let me jog your memory. Gumshoe represented one of the river districts. Although he had a whole lot of farmers in his bailiwick, he was out for any substantial assets he could fasten on to without making too much noise about it. And, what's more, he didn't hold himself at a cheap price, either. He always stuck for something worth while, and if he did not get it he was a bad man to deal with. He had the courage of his immoral convictions and showed a daredevil nerve when any of the corporate interests tried to throw him.

One of the biggest franchise bills that came up during the session was engineered by a transplanted New England Yankee who hated to see a cent slip through his own fingers. This made Gumshoe mad, and he fixed a price on his support that threw the Yankee into the cramps. They dickered and haggled up to the last minute before the bill was to come up for third reading; but Gumshoe wouldn't

budge an inch or discount his price a dollar.

At the last ragged minute before roll call that Yankee, who was hid away in one of the committee rooms, turned to a young fellow from his own town, whom he had put on the pay roll, and handed him a long envelope containing $5,000 with the remark: "Just hustle into the House and quietly hand this to Mr. Smith. It contains some papers he wants to use right away."

The young fellow was as green as a June pasture, so far as his knowledge of inside legislation was concerned, and besides that he didn't have any more than his share of brains, anyway. He slipped into the House and asked the doorkeeper, "Where is Mr. Smith?"

"Right down the aisle there," answered the doorkeeper, pointing. "Standing with his hand on his desk."

The young fellow slipped quietly down the aisle and laid the envelope on the desk indicated. Before the roll call actually began Gumshoe slipped out of the door and began to

look anxiously about. In a moment he found what he was looking for, and he and the Yankee held about two minutes of mighty animated conversation. Then the young man who had been sent with the envelope came up. The Yankee grabbed him by the arm and asked in an undertone: "You gave those papers to Smith, didn't you?"

"Yes," answered the young man in a scared voice.

Then Gumshoe turned on the little fellow and said:

"You're a liar, you never gave it to me. You've salted it down in your own pocket, you little thief."

"You?" was the astonished response. "Of course I didn't give it to you. I gave it to Mr. Smith, that grizzle-headed little old man with the whiskers, on the right hand of the center aisle, third seat down."

In one second Gumshoe made a rush for the meek little old farmer from the southern end of the state, who hadn't said a word during the whole session excepting to answer on roll

With a fierce grip on the old farmer's shoulder Gumshoe blurted out "You pious old sneak thief!"

call. About half of the members hadn't discovered that his name was Smith—and those who had distinguished between him from the other Smith by giving him his right surname, while they always spoke of the main Smith as Gumshoe. This was how the doorkeeper happened to send the innocent young man to Farmer Smith instead of Gumshoe from the river district.

With a fierce grip on the old farmer's shoulder Gumshoe blurted out:

"Here, you old pious sneak thief, just fork over that stuff right quick or I'll smash every bone in your body."

With a shaking hand the scared farmer made a dive into his inside pocket, pulled out the long envelope, and handed it over. When Gumshoe saw that it had been opened he gave a nasty laugh and said:

"If you ever peep on this I'll teach you that there's such a thing as honor among thieves."

On the roll call Gumshoe voted for the bill, and voted hard. As several of the members sitting near had heard snatches of the conver-

sation an inkling of the story leaked out and got into the newspapers. Of course, Farmer Smith put up the defense that he wasn't going to keep the money.

Some believed this and some didn't. Anyhow, both of the men were roasted to a crisp in the newspapers and any one would naturally have concluded that neither of the Smiths would ever dare to run for pathmaster. But the records show that they were both back again in the House inside of four years and Gumshoe, as you probably remember, was later sent to the Senate.

And so, Ned, you will see why I don't put quite as much confidence in the memory or the constancy of the ordinary constituency as your letter leads me to think you do. The average American king can forget benefactions and forget crimes about as nimbly as any other kind of a king. My advice is: Don't scrimp your next campaign fund because you have turned a good trick for your people; get hold of some new issue and convince them that

it's their only salvation and just as necessary as the thing you have already landed.

I'm mighty sorry that I can't be on hand for the wedding; but I want to say that I'd rather see you married to Kate than witness your entrance into the United States Senate. You may think the latter is a long way off—and so it may be—but I like the way you've trotted your trial heats and I'm expecting more of you than some fellows who can't see beyond the lines of a printed pedigree.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

PUPPETS AND PULLS.

The new joys of home life have caused Ned to feel the responsibility of making substantial provision for his family in the way of going out after a fat Federal job—and he intimates that he has a political pull which will do the work of a steam derrick. This spurs the old Governor to offer a few observations on the reliable uncertainty of pulls in general and proves his point by a story of a pull that outdid all expectations.

CHAPTER VII.

PUPPETS AND PULLS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

I'm mighty glad that you find the present joys of your new home better than any picture of a future paradise painted in the sermons that Elder Ripp used to preach to you in the little old Free Will church those Sundays when you opened the campaign by taking up your devotional duties again. I always did think you were put on the light running domestic order and that you'd drop gracefully into the responsibilities of married life.

Consequently, I'm not surprised to have you write in a strain that shows you are disgustingly happy and that you have some earthly interest beyond the glory of representing a constituency and being an exalted errand boy for a bunch of folks you wouldn't hire out to for day wages. It's good for you to feel that there's something in life beyond pulling and

being pulled—and for that which "profiteth not."

Your decision to make a try for some good fat appointment that will put you in position to provide for your wife is a practical resolution—but it recalls to me a certain speech which you delivered at Canada Corners, on the fourth of July, in which you magnified the glories of an elective and representative office and dealt out high scorn for the "political pot hunters" who "prostituted ambition for public service and made it a matter of ignoble commerce."

Those were your words, Ned; but I can forgive your change of heart when I remember that you were dealing a side cut to the boss of the other machine, who let the other fellows take all the elective, bandstand places while he dropped quietly into the kind of a nest you are now looking for. Then, again, you're just married—and that is enough to account for almost any sort of a stampede in the direction of settled income and "secure tenure of service."

But the man who can plunge into matrimony and at the same time stake his future on the efficacy of political pulls is so full of faith that he ought to be talking from behind a pulpit instead of prancing around on the stump.

In all the calendar of "long shots," the political pull is the rangiest and most cocksure uncertainty. Of course, you're going to come back at me with the statement that the political pull may be depended upon not to realize more than the candidate's expectations. Generally that's so—but such is the consistency of this splendid uncertainty that I'll have to tell you what happened to my friend Driggs, just over the state line. He's recently been out to visit me, and so the matter is fresh in my mind.

Now, Billy was always on the other side of the fence from me, politically, and I used to rally him about being always out in the cold. But he kept right at the mourner's bench, leading the faithful and exhorting the political sinners to come forward and get the true light. And all this time Billy's law practice continued

to grow lighter and his line of credit and long-time notes heavier.

Well, as you know, his side finally came in on the great tidal wave. I never saw a pastor who had prayed and sowed and watered and waited for the increase who was more surprised when a real red hot revival actually opened up right at his feet and made the rafters ring with the shouts of the saved than was Billy when he heard that the country had gone his way. Naturally, he had the pulchritude of a singed cat. What came out of his face, when he talked to a crowd, however, was so much beyond the promise of the face it came from that the people took to him like women to religion. It seemed as if they had tired of the handsome, "black eagle," imposing type of political hero, and were ready to find relief in the plain, red headed, pug nosed, freckled, and sawed off sort of a leader that came under the head of Billy Driggs.

Anyhow, he was given credit for carrying his part of the state—and his other line of credit began to pick up considerably, too, as

the war horses gathered at the county seat and talked over the office that Billy would probably be appointed to.

Well, he finally went on to Washington with all the pulls that he could scare up working overtime in his behalf. He had made up his mind to strike high and ask for the position of United States marshal for his end of the state. The marshalship paid $6,000 a year—and that was more money than he had handled in six years. Every little while, before Billy went up to Jerusalem to the great feast of the chosen, he would stop and say to himself, "Too good to be true! Too good to happen to me!"

Now, while Billy had always been a twelve hour laborer in the vineyard, he was so absorbed in the conversion of sinners that he didn't know what the fat places on the circuit paid—and he had to ask what was the best paying appointment ever held by a man from that district before he knew what to apply for. "Topnotch or nothing," was his battle cry when he went out for the indorsement of the party leaders.

He had seen so many lean years of faithful service when the enemy held the corner on all the official cribs that, now in the days of his party's fatness and of his own righteous reward, the habit of good, honest hustling stuck to him, and he lined up an array of pulls and indorsements that made him swell with happiness every time he went over the list. "Some folks have to die before they can get that sort of thing," he would say as he tapped the bundle of indorsements.

In Washington he kept right on hustling just as if he'd only started out with his petition. The public men seemed to take to his style of beauty, and even the President was uncommonly gracious to Billy when Congressman Skipp introduced him. The wise ones told Billy that he was all right, and that nothing short of an O. K. on an application ever went with that peculiar brand of smile.

But somehow the appointment didn't come out quite as quickly as Billy had hoped—and this delay only made him hustle the harder. His only antidote for "hope deferred" was

"It's a mistake!" he started to shout, when a friend yanked him back into his seat.

more hustling. And he did it in a quiet, unobtrusive way that didn't stir up opposition.

One day, however, when Billy was about to cinch himself up again for another "pull" campaign, he got word that something was going to happen at the Senate that afternoon which might be of particular interest to him. He was there in the gallery listening to every word that fell from the lips of the oracle of the chair. Finally he heard his own name read off in connection with the words, "To be collector of the port."

Billy jumped to his feet in a minute as if he were back home in a county convention and some Indian was trying to commit the party to a hopeless heresy.

"It's a mistake," he started to shout, when the friend who was with him laid violent hands on his coat tails, yanked him back into his seat and said:

"Shut up, you fool! What if it is a mistake! Don't you know the collectorship pays $12,000 a year! Mistakes of that kind don't happen

to anybody but fools and the elect—and you're not anybody's fool!"

Well, it turned out that Billy's appointment stuck, and he made good in such a way that a bunch of big fellows in his party took an interest in him and put him in the way of making more money than he had ever dreamed of seeing. And he made it honestly, too. Then his fame as a party oracle spread with the growth of his bank account until now he is known in every state in the union among the solid moneyed men.

I hope, Ned, that your pull will be of this "thirty baskets of fragments" kind, but I'm afraid that you're not quite enough of a singed cat to have a claim to that kind of luck.

When it comes time to put on the screws and really come to a showdown, I hope you'll not have quite the experience that came to a young chap from my old home town, who went out into the sheep country, made friends as fast as he lost money, and finally landed the comfortable little job of reading clerk in the house.

Jim had a voice like the sound of many

waters, the presence of a Presidential possibility and the nerve of a goat. He fitted into the place as handy as a hoe into dirt, and made friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness right and left. Before the session was fairly under way he had done a trick or two that made him solid with the strong minority and he was considered a sort of consulting pilot for any difficult piece of legislative navigation that came up. Beside him, the Wobbly Willie speaker was small potatoes.

One day a member came to him and said:

"Jim, how in tunket am I going to get that bill of mine through creating the office of state oil inspector? You see, they killed my measure in the Senate, and I got even by burying the Senate bill, to the same effect, here in the House."

"Looks a great deal as if the state would worry along awhile without an oil inspector," said Jim, "but if there's a ghost of a show to, I'm going to help you out, Tom, for I've made up my mind to land that particular job myself."

"Well," replied Tom, "my goose is cooked if I don't get that bill through. I can't support you for the place when it's made; but I won't do anything in particular to keep you from getting it."

"There's just one bluff that may work," said Jim, "if the measly parliamentary sticklers don't catch on to the game. Spring a resolution for a conference committee of five—two from the Senate and three from the House—and have the bill revised and put through."

This scheme worked, the bill was passed, and inside of a week every member of Jim's political faith in the House, with two exceptions, went before the Governor in a body and asked for his appointment to the new position, which was worth $20,000 a year.

"This is the strongest indorsement any man has ever had for any appointment," replied the Governor, "and the request of this delegation shall be granted if it is within my power to do so."

Privately the Governor explained to Jim that he made this slight reservation for fear that

possibly he might have given the Senator who introduced the "oil bill" to understand that he was favorably inclined toward a friend of the Senator's. Later, Jim was informed that the records of executive correspondence showed no such entanglement and that his appointment would be made as soon as circumstances would permit. But, somehow, there appeared to be a regular glut of executive circumstances, and the big plum still stuck to the tree in spite of all the shaking Jim could do. Finally, months afterward, when Jim's bank account was wasted to a shadow from an acute attack of creeping consumption, he got a straight tip from a square politician, who had one leg in the grave, that the Governor had appointed another fellow. Then Jim went up to the mansion and put his case strong. He got a square in the eye assurance that all was well and that the delay was simply for reason of executive policy.

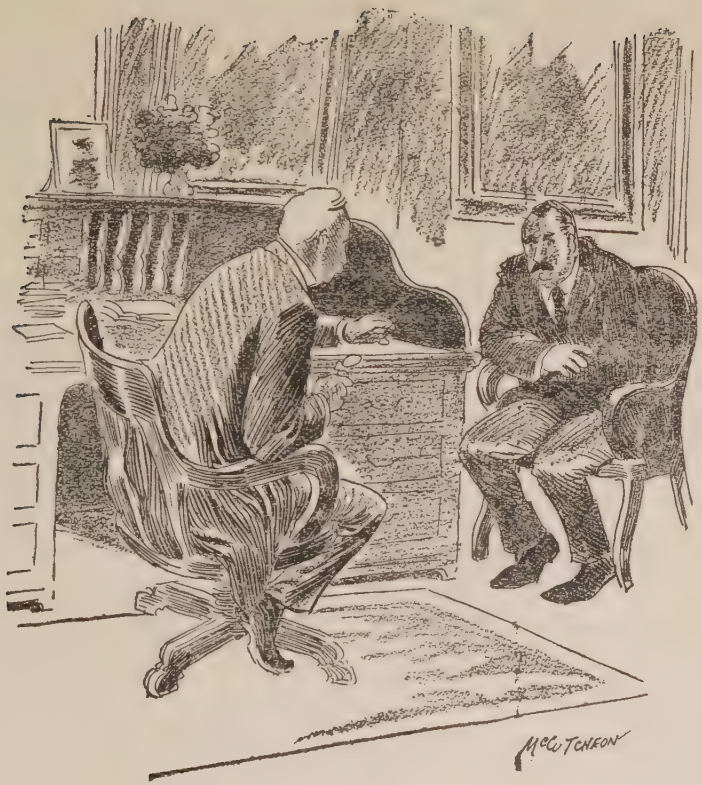
Next day, while the man with the pull of practically a solid party at his back and work-

ing overtime was pondering and guessing, he was called to the chamber.

"Your state needs you," said the Governor, "in another capacity, sir, and I shall not take 'No' for an answer. I am about to make up a commission to exploit to the world one of the greatest industries of our commonwealth. You know that industry, as few of our citizens do; true, there is no salary attached to the position, but your labor will bring you in contact with the great captains of finance, and the way will speedily open for you to make a great deal of money. Your sacrifice in letting the other position pass will be only temporary and you will soon come into your reward."

Before Jim could catch his breath and get his bearings he had accepted a tinfoil honor. When the announcement of the appointment was made the state boss came to Jim and explained:

"You old ninny! Two months ago the Governor gave his absolute pledge that he would make you oil inspector, but bound me not to tell you because you might tell your wife and



"The State needs you" said the Governor "in another capacity, and I shall not take 'no' for an answer."

let the thing leak out before he could fix his fences for the United States Senatorship. And now he's worked you into trading $20,000 a year for a tin horn."

Jim meditated for a while on the perverseness of dead sure pulls and then started in on a campaign that cost the Governor the Senatorship.

But that didn't pay his grocery bills, and before the next session he saw several hungry days. And I could tell you a dozen other incidents that show as clearly how a double riveted pull can taper off into thin air and an empty stomach. So, don't rent a new house, buy bonds, or throw over your present job until you have the commission that you hanker for actually in your hands.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

GRAFTERS AND STINGERS.

Commenting on Ned's surprise that a seasoned politician has "sold himself for thirty cents," William Bradley gives his notions of grafters and indulges in a story and a few epigrams to drive home the point, taking his text from his boyhood experiences in breaking up "bumble bees' nests."

CHAPTER VIII.

GRAFTERS AND STINGERS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

When you size up a bunch of aldermen or a new legislature, just remember the simple little fact of natural history that a "bumble" bee is always biggest right after it's hatched. The average alderman or legislator—especially if he's inclined to be "on the make"—is about seven times larger and more important in his first term than he will ever be again.

You seem to be surprised that our old friend Kite sold himself for about 30 cents after having been in politics for as many years, and that he hates and fights the decent men who wouldn't do the same trick. If the corporation had attempted to land him at that price in his first term he would have been so mad that likely he'd made a bluff at exposing the attempt to tamper with his "honor"; but the passage of time is likely to make a little shrinkage in most

things, including the importance of an alderman or a legislator. There's nothing I know of that loses so much of size in the seasoning process as a politician—excepting a "bumble" bee and a basswood log.

Your story about Kite Hendee puts me in mind of a little chapter in the gentle art of grafting that bears right on this "bumble" bee point and is worth remembering. Up in the city a plumber was elected to the board of aldermen. He didn't calculate to put in his time in the council just to cure himself of hay fever, and there wasn't a fresh baked city father in the bunch that felt his oats like Barney Brennan. The flowers on his desk that first night looked like a composite of all the Dutch posey beds in Little Germany, and one of the newspaper boys remarked that the corporations would have to pay for that floral display at Easter prices.

Being a plumber, Barney naturally was used to pretty stiff prices anyway, and had acquired the habit of charging up time from the minute he began to look for his tools till he returned

and had sharpened his pipe cutters ready for the next job.

Now, the little Hoosier who was looking after the interests of one of the street railroad companies had broken up enough "bumbles'" nests in his boyhood to know something about the law of shrinkages, and, as he had been in the house building business for several years, was fairly familiar with the general habits of plumbers.

There was a little trick that the Hoosier wanted to put through the council, but there wasn't enough involved to make it really a first class object from an aldermanic standpoint. Consequently, as the council contained a lot of new members who were mightily impressed with their own importance, the scout for the street railway company had to figure close and make up in cunning what he lacked in available coin with which to grease the job.

All the hold-overs that could be done business with were lined up quick, and at the regular discount-in-large-quantities rate. But he was considerable short of the required number of

votes, and had to raise his prices in several instances to get the new men that could be seen at all. He sent one of the old members to sound Barney, the plumber, but that dignitary sniffed at the offer of $500, and swore by the great Gas Pipe Cinch that he wouldn't consider anything less than $1,000.

According to the little Hoosier's score card, the game was up with him unless he could get Barney into line—but, of course, Barney didn't know that his vote was the key to the whole situation. Some of the Hoosier's advisers got anxious about the situation and kept asking if he wasn't going to come to Barney's terms "just for a starter."

"Nope," said the Hoosier, "can't afford that. It establishes a bad precedent—and, besides, he'll come around all right when the time comes."

"Don't you think it," said the fellows. "He's bigger in his own mind right now than the Mayor himself. You'd better settle with him this once, and after a while he'll get some

"Nope," said the Hoosier, "can't afford that. It establishes a bad precedent."

sense and come down to hardpan prices like the rest of us."

But the Hoosier only shook his head, grinned and said that Barney would drop into line without any trouble. The night the resolution came up for final vote there hadn't been a change of a figure on the little Hoosier's score card. He confided this to the friend who sat right behind Barney, and, handing him a long manila envelope, he said:

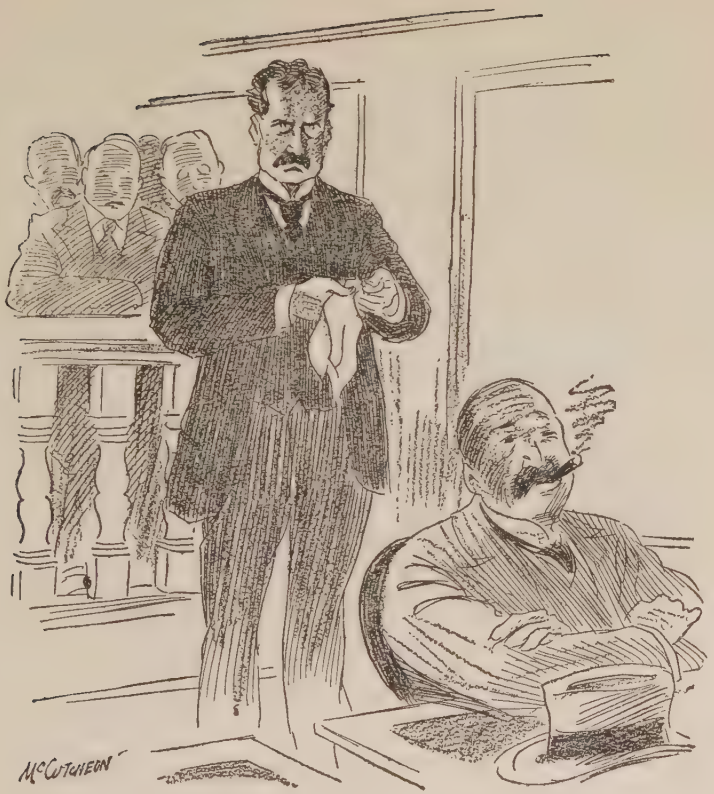
"If that plumber pirate gets up to make a spiel against our resolution, just keep one eye on me; the minute I take off my eyeglasses and start to rub them with my handkerchief, you reach around in front of Barney and put this envelope on his desk. I guess he'll take a twist on his tiller and round his bow into the wind when he sees what's put up to him. I'll be up by the clerk's desk with the newspaper boys."

Things were run quite wide open in those days in the council and bolder hands had been played than the showdown the Hoosier outlined. Well, sure enough, Barney arose in his seat to speak on the resolution. Like most

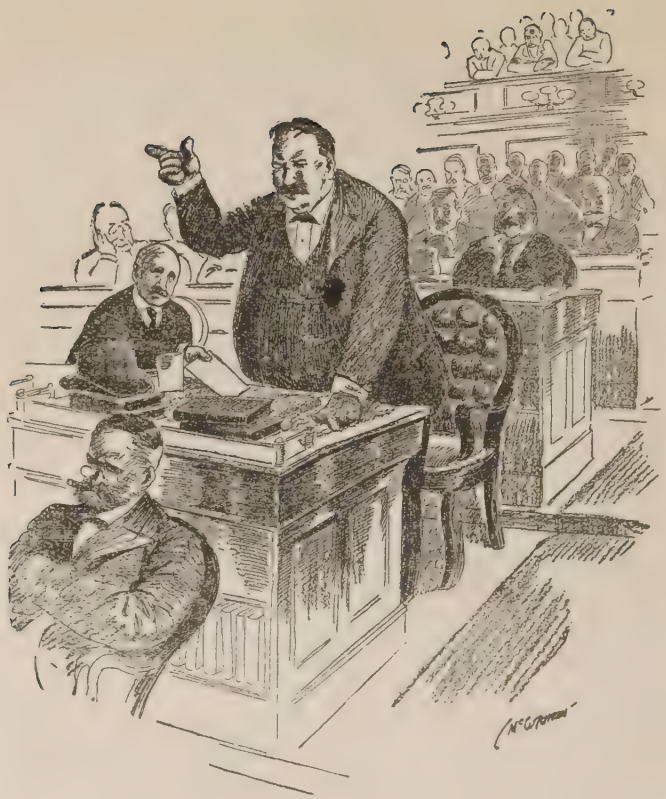
new members he hung on to his desk with a death grip and seemed afraid the whole floor would slide out from under him if he should let go for a second. But he had set himself to sail the eagle a little and at the same time to let the fellows who were doing things understand that they had a heavyweight to deal with when they didn't come to his terms. They couldn't trifle with his affections without getting a blow with a lead pipe that would make itself felt!

After his throat was cleared and the buck fever had got out of his voice, he began to lay the foundations for a forty minute indictment against the street car company calculated to put that "bloated incubus" out of business for all time. He had sunk the piles and put in the underground stonework of his speech when the little Hoosier calmly took off his glasses and began to rub them with his handkerchief.

Instantly the alderman behind Barney caught the signal, reached forward and laid the long envelope on the orator's desk. The speaker continued for a few minutes and then paused for a drink of water. As he did so he



The little Hoosier calmly took off his glasses and began to rub them with his pocket handkerchief.



Instantly the alderman behind Barney caught the signal, reached forward and laid the long envelope on the orator's desk.

stole a glance at the envelope and saw a figure "1," followed by three ciphers written in pencil on the corner of the envelope. He put the drinking glass down over the figures and then proceeded in the same strain. The face of the Hoosier's friend fell like a batch of sour dough. And it didn't change until the speaker paused and took a new grip with the words:

"An' now, gentlemen, this is one side of the situation. There are always two sides to every case, and a spirit of judicial fairness compels me to present the other side. Between two evils we must choose the least. While the resolution would benefit a graspin' corporation, its defeat would deprive the people of rights and privileges that are of inestimable value."

Then he went ahead and put out as plausible a line of argument as the little Hoosier himself could have furnished. And he wound up with the declaration:

"I have not hesitated to expose the motives that have influenced this monopoly to ask for the resolution before us; but, gentlemen, I am compelled to vote for its passage because it is

the best thing for the people. Experience should teach us that when this hungry corporation gives us three-quarters of a loaf we should grab it before it is too late."

When Barney sat down some one nudged the little Hoosier and whispered: "Must have met his price, eh? Or, mebbe, he raised on you the last minute. But it hain't fair to us fellows who stand by you right along to get the small change while the fancy sums go to these goslins that are fresh from the nest."

"Just you go out with Barney," says the Hoosier, "and watch him when he opens up his envelope over in Billy Ryan's place. Take him into a private stall—you two alone—and give him champagne until his tongue is loosened. I'll stand the bill."

"A wink's as good as a nod to a blind horse," said the member as he started for Barney's seat and cinched the invitation. After adjournment the two went into retirement together in one of Billy Ryan's stalls and opened a few bottles of extra dry and ate a beefsteak on the side. Every once in a while Barney's fingers

would stray into his inside coat pocket as if to make sure something was there. Finally, the friend said:

"Old man, you're one of the Ancient and Honorable Gray Wolves now. If you don't know that they're a mighty square set and always pull together you'll find it out soon. There's no squealing and no secrets in the pack. Better pull out that envelope and see what you draw. I never saw anything so slick as the way you brought 'em to time."

Barney stiffened up, said something about being able to play the game if he hadn't been long in it, and drew out the envelope. "I guess none of the boys did any better 'n that," he added, pointing to the figures. "One thousand ain't so bad for the first meeting."

"One thousand—cents!" exclaimed his companion. "I guess you'd better have your eyes tested for glasses, old man. A decimal point, if it is mighty small, cuts a big figure in this business, I can tell you, where we've got to take things on their face and count the goods afterwards."

"Cents!" yelled Barney, ripping open the envelope and dropping a bright, new $10 bill into his plate. Barney always ordered his steak extra rare but they say that when he had got done using the Irish language that night his steak was burned to a crisp and crinkled up around the edges like a German pancake. He made such an uproar that the other aldermen who had dropped in after the session to take a little nourishment and sit up and notice things, came rushing into the stall.

Of course, the whole story was out in a minute—just as the Hoosier had intended it to be, only without the necessity of giving it away himself.

But you may be sure the Hoosier spread the gospel of the $10 bill in every precinct club in Barney's ward until the alderman couldn't go up an alley without being grinned at by the wise ones. Then the Hoosier sent a trim little bruiser who was handy with his fists down into the ward to finish the job of making a monkey of the Hon. Barney. The lightweight happened into a place where the alderman was at-

tempting to recover lost ground by flooding the ward with beer. After an introduction the slugger gayly started in to joke Barney about the $10 ordinance.

Instantly the alderman, who was a big fellow, thought he saw a way to make good with his people and he struck right out from the shoulder. But the little athlete dodged, and when he finished up with Barney that city father looked like a slice of fresh liver.

That winter Barney scattered Christmas turkeys among "his people" as lavishly as if they were sparrows. But the whole ward continued to grin whenever his name was mentioned, and it was carried against him at the next primaries by a young chap who had once been a theological student and was suspected of being a half-baked prohibitionist.

But, to go back to the "bumble" bee proposition: I've broken up enough nests in the old south meadow, when I was a boy, to prevent me from seeing out of both eyes for a week; but the lessons I learned while nursing my stings have stood me in good stead in many a

campaign. One of the things that has stuck to me, from those sore reflections, is the observation that the coward who dodges behind the fellow that does the fighting is the one that wants most of the honey and howls loudest when he happens to get stung.

If that isn't the way in the world of politics, then I never led a certain fight back in the old state that is still remembered by the seasoned warhorses of the party! Find a fellow whose mouth waters to catch the drippings from a piece of political honeycomb, and who wants the other boys to be contented with "bee bread," and you've got a man that'll hide behind your back when you're under fire. Our friend Kite was of just that sort.

Then, again, the "bumblers" taught me that when the chief end of existence is to plant a stinger where it'll do the most good there may be a whole lot of savage satisfaction in the process—but it's sure death to the one that lands the stinger! The whole highway of politics is scattered with the carcasses of bright politicians who acquired a passion for stinging;

they finally got in their work but every boy that has broken up a " bumbler's " nest knows that the bee that lands a stinger gives up his life along with it.

So, Ned, don't mind the Grafters or the Stingers. You'll outlive them all.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

QUITTERS AND STAYERS.

Ned has told his troubles to his old friend and confessed that he is considerably torn up by the discovery that there are several traitors and a bunch of weak-kneed camp followers in his ranks. This stirs the old veteran to vent his feelings on the subject of the various stripes of politicians to be found in every camp. He gives his opinion of their relative importance and illustrates his meaning by an anecdote of politics "up in the Hill Country beyond Judea."

CHAPTER IX.

QUITTERS AND STAYERS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

I'm glad that my passing remarks on the general cussedness of grafters and stingers gave you the consolation they were intended to carry. Judging from the letter before me, you seem to be learning a good deal in a short space of time about the different species into which the general family of Politician is subdivided; and it strikes me that the particular breeds now claiming your attention are the Quitters and the Stayers.

The atmosphere of politics doesn't seem especially suited to the raising of spiritual orchids; but there isn't another field of human effort in which the rougher virtues shine to better advantage or the meanness of the human mind can crop up in a more contemptible way. The thing best loved in a politician is that which makes a burdock the best hated

weed on earth—the quality of sticking through thick and thin. A good old fashioned dock burr is the sort of a floral emblem for me when going into the ups and downs of politics; no matter whether your campaign fund is 50 cents or $50,000, the burrs and the real stayers will stick so tight you can't separate them from you without individually pulling them into pieces. The Stayers may want you to go some other road than the one you're set on traveling, but they'll stick with you to the end and not pester you with a lot of nagging questions and arguments. They aren't forever reminding you that they expect you some time to square accounts with them on a Santa Claus basis; and they don't rattle off from you like chestnuts after a hard frost, when the first wind of political adversity strikes you.

I've sat up a good many nights and burned a heap of strong tobacco trying to figure out just where a Stayer leaves off and a Quitter begins, and I've about come to the conclusion that the line of separation shifts itself about

as often as the bed of the Missouri river. However, I've sized it up about this way: When your political bedfellow personally and at first hand proves to you that he's more kinds of a hog, liar, and general all-around traitor than his worst enemies set him out to be, you're warranted in cutting him out of the bunch on giving due notice of your intentions—and the boys can't rightly call you a quitter for doing it.

This question of the ethics of quitting and staying was never better illustrated to my mind than in a township election when I was a boy back in York state. Up in the region called the "hill country beyond Judea" Luman Dodd, a young buck who had more relatives in the valley of Gahunda than a rabbit, was the leader of the choir in the little Disciple church, and figured that, being the best singer and the handsomest and most numerously connected young man in the whole hill country, he stood a good chance, in time, to go to the legislature if he could only get the right sort

of a start. But the start was what bothered him, for it had to be a regular run-and-jump in order to land him in Albany among the law-makers.

Over in the valley of Gahunda, in the same township, was Watt Ely, a solid old Yankee who had run the Republican politics of the settlement for several years. Young Lume had had sense to make up strong to Watt and "ride the town" whenever there was a close fight on, and his tenor voice was a star attraction at every Republican rally. Old Watt took a shine to the boy and nursed Lume's political ambitions, telling him his day would come sometime. And it did come at a certain town caucus, when Watt got the old boys together and put Lume on the head of the ticket for supervisor. There was a streak of tenor melody from the townhouse to Lume's home as the young candidate left the caucus to carry the news to his wife.

But after the first burst of song the leader of the choir got busy meditating on how he

was to make the big start that would give him the impetus for a leap into the legislature. Nothing commonplace, like a good record, would answer the purpose, to his notion. He must do something to startle the natives and show them that they needed a tenor voice in the councils of the state at Albany.

He went out into the woodshed until the plan of campaign gradually took shape—for Lume's mind was about as nimble as a cove oyster's. But when he had once bedded himself down in a new set of ideas he was there to stay. At the end of a three hours' communion with himself, Lume saw the way from the townhouse to the capital; he would roll up a majority for himself that would make the other figures on his ticket look sick and prove that he was the most popular man that had ever showed his head above the waters of politics in the "country beyond Judea."

And the way he planned to accomplish this feat proved to himself that he was cut out from the beginning of creation for a statesman. O,

but it was a cunning trick! He was sure that nobody else had thought of such a smart turn. Moses Siler, who was named for justice of the peace, had taken a collection at the close of the caucus from all the candidates and had gone over to Slippery Elm to get the Republican tickets printed, so they could be distributed among the voters during Sunday and Monday. But Lume had decided to do a little ticket business on his own hook, so he sent his younger brother over to the Burg, the other side of the hills, and had a batch of Democratic tickets printed on the same kind of paper as the Republican ballots, only the name of Luman Dodd was substituted in the place of the Democratic candidate's name. These he'd use where they'd do the most good.

On Sunday Lume was in his place at the head of the choir, behind the organ, and he celebrated the occasion by singing a solo that made some of the sisters wipe their eyes. You couldn't have thrown a contribution box in any direction in that audience without hitting an

At the head of the choir, Lume sang a solo that made the sisters wipe their eyes.

A second after Moses put his foot on the wheel hub he took out one of the special tickets.

aunt, uncle, or cousin of Luman Dodd's—and they were all proud of the new distinction that had come to the family in the shape of Lume's nomination. Out in the horsesheds, after the services, Lume held a reunion of the male members of the Dodd line, and it was agreed that every one of them suspected of having the slightest influence in the community should get out and "ride" from Monday's sunup until the close of the polls on Tuesday. Lume told them, of course, he'd be elected—no question about that—but he wanted to roll up the biggest majority ever carried by a candidate in Bethlehem township.

On Monday he started out to ride the township himself. All was smooth sailing until he struck the valley of Gahunda and drove in at Mose Siler's bars to discuss the outlook and plan for some special hustling on Tuesday. In about a second after Mose planted his foot on the hub of the buggy he took from his wallet one of the special Democratic tickets that Lume had hired a tin peddler to distribute

among the wives of the hill country Democrats along with some bright new dippers and nutmeg graters.

"Lume," asked Mose, "do you know anything about this? Ever see one of these before or have anything to do with the printing or peddling of these ballots?"

Not being a quick thinker and, knowing that he'd got to speak up right quick or stand convicted of party treachery in the eyes of the candidate for justice of the peace, Lume swallowed hard and then answered:

"Never; some one is trying to throw dirt into my grist. Do you think, Mose Siler, that a young man who has sung tenor in the choir of the Disciple church as long as I have and has got the chances that are in front of me would do this kind of a thing?"

"I've got my i-dees on that subject," said Siler, "but all I'm going to say right now is that some one's done it and that that feller's a scurvy hound, and unless I find some one who won't deny it I'm going to lay it to your

door—and my friends in Gahunda valley will strip your hide off tomorrow at the polls."

That was all,—and Lume continued his ride, the most disconsolate man in the whole hill country beyond Judea. But, as Siler's threat kept filtering through his mind, he caught at one phrase in it that gave him a ray of hope: "Unless I find some one who won't deny it." It was an hour before his mental mill had ground this grist and brought him to a decision. He turned his horse around and started for Watt Ely's, clear at the lower end of the long valley. By the time he was pounding on Watt's door with one hand and keeping off the watchdogs with a whip in his other hand, it was 4 o'clock in the morning. Old Watt wasn't dressed for company, but Lume pushed inside without waiting for an invitation. Then he unburdened his soul in double quick time and made a clean breast of the whole business. Before Watt could open up Lume began to whine for quarter.

"I've stood by you and rode this town night and day for you, Mr. Ely," he said, "and a

good many times I've run the risk of ruining my voice in order to furnish your rallies with campaign music. You're the chairman of our county committee and the boys will stand by anything you say. All Siler wants is to find some one who won't deny fixing up that Democratic ticket. You're so strong in the county that a little thing like this won't hurt you a bit —but, Lord, a' mighty! it'll ruin me for all time."

"Look here!" cut in Watt. "You've done as dirty a trick as ever was put up by a low down politician. But you have rode for me when the fight was close. Besides, I want to show my gratitude to the Almighty for not making me responsible for the spoiling of your voice. So you can just go ahead with the lie you've started out with and I'll not deny fixing the ticket to Mose or anybody else—not until election's over. Does that satisfy you?"

Lume was so overjoyed at this that he didn't quite catch the full force of the qualifying clause and he rode back home feeling that there was still hope. His first move was to send

word, in a roundabout way, to Mose that he better take his question to Watt Ely. He did, and the county chairman's answer was:

"Well, what of it? I don't deny it. Lume says it's so, an' he sings in the Disciple choir, an' is a mighty respectable member of the community."

That gave Lume a new lease of life. He caught at the straw that Watt had thrown out, and in an hour was telling his excited uncles and cousins that the county chairman had "done him dirt"—probably for the reason that he wanted to kill him off once for all. The whole township was torn up by the fight, and the result was the heaviest vote that was ever polled.

Meantime, Lume, who was considerably green at lying, began to hear from his conscience and grow white around the gills. And when the votes were counted and the footing of the tally sheet was announced he had a mighty sickly looking smile of triumph on his face for a man who had run ahead of his ticket.

After the election clerks had put up their

papers old Watt mounted a cracker box in the general store. There was a light in his eye that meant business, and the boys knew it.

"Before I begin to talk I want any man here who thinks I'm a quitter or who has ever known me to break my word in any political deal to speak right out in meeting."

Not a man spoke, and he took a swig from the cider pitcher before going ahead. While he was clearing his throat Lume slipped out of the crowd, saying he'd forgot to shut the henhouse door. But the thing he'd forgotten was the qualifying clause in old Watt's promise.

"I jest want to remark," continued Watt, "that having a whole nation of good, honest kinfolks sometimes won't save a man from doing things that would shame a polecat, and that a tenor voice hain't any particular guaranty of truthful lips."

Then he laid open the entire circumstances regarding the loaded Democratic ticket. That night the news traveled the length and breadth

of Gahunda valley and all over the hill country beyond Judea.

The next afternoon every relative of Lume's in the whole region was attending another family reunion at the horsesheds. Lume bawled and begged, but the Dodds were made of hardy stock and didn't propose to have their good name dragged in the mire of Gahunda without letting the natives know that he wasn't upheld by his kinfolks. When they got through with him he had been officially thrown out of the church, the choir and the Sunday school. They took his resignation from the board of supervisors and packed him off to Ohio, bag and baggage.

The last I heard of him he was doing a turn in a minstrel show that was making one night stands through Missouri and Arkansas—which is some different from throwing a tenor voice at the speaker of the House in Albany.

Whenever any one mentions the subject of Quitters and Stayers somehow I can't help thinking that old Watt Ely got about as near the right dividing line as most of us can.

There's such a thing as being an over-stayer—and it's almost as bad a breed as the easy quitter. But one thing is sure, the politician who don't make his bare word better than a first mortgage on an Illinois farm don't know the first principles of good politics.

He can smash the moral law into kindling wood in a lot of particulars, but if he keeps this one commandment sound he will have more followers than a wagonload of fodder in a pasture of hungry steers. And the funny part of it is that a good share of the modern white ribbon "practical reformers" who have kept the whole moral code from their youth up seem to forget this one tenet the minute they break into politics, while the boss who would shake down a railroad without winking makes this the one plank in his confession of faith.

Now, Ned, if you don't want me to run on at such a rate you mustn't write me the things that stir up all my old political dander. Just keep pruning off the Quitters and grafting on the Stayers and you'll yet land the big job you're after.

The cattle are doing fine and the ranch is the best place I've struck yet for solid comfort. It beats the executive mansion and a seat in the Senate all hollow—for I've tried 'em both. Give my regards to your wife.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

ELEVENTH HOUR

SURPRISES.

Touching Ned's announcement that he has the congressional nomination "spiked to the rails," the old Governor replies with the story of how Little Danny once loosened a political cinch and sprung a surprise, at the eleventh hour, that made his political future.

CHAPTER X.

ELEVENTH HOUR SURPRISES.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

My father used to say that he never knew of a horse being stolen excepting from a barn that had been locked by a boy—and generally by a boy who had that very night been back, after starting for the house, to wiggle the padlock and "make sure."

Most of the good, sound political drubbings that I've seen administered have been in the nature of eleventh hour surprises. In one respect, at least, the arrival of the new political victor and the last coming of the Lord are strikingly similar; both are illuminatingly described in the words of scripture reading, "like a thief in the night" and "in an hour when ye think not."

This is by way of reply to your statement that there isn't a gap, a weak rail, a rotten stake, or a split rider in all your political fences;

that you've got everything inclosed seven rails high and are only waiting for the congressional convention to drive the delegates right into the " stanchels " and have them counted.

Now, Ned, if all political cattle were exactly alike you might safely go and visit your wife's relatives until the morning of the convention; but if the old district is anything like it used to be when I rode it in an open buggy and kept a list of the farm dogs' names it is a safe plan to go out every hour or two and wiggle the padlock on the barn door and put in the rest of the time patrolling the line fences. After you've turned yourself three times around and bedded yourself nicely down into a political situation, like a young hound in a haystack, make up your mind that it's time to hit the trail again and to hang to it until the pelt of the fox is nailed to the barn door.

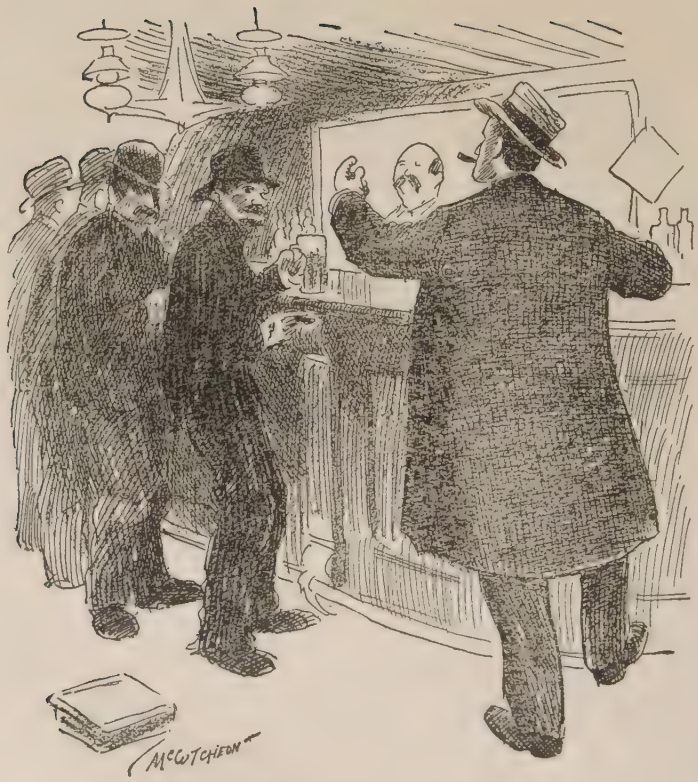
And it's surprising how trifling a thing it takes to confound the mighty and turn a political certainty into a reminiscence. Perhaps you didn't know the Hon. Xavier Flynn—they called him " Salve " for short—up in the city;

but there's a powerful parable in the story of his fall. It came like a sharp frost out of a cloudy sky and struck so deep down to the roots that it hasn't got thawed out yet. Salve had run things in the old Fifth Ward so long and with so high a hand that he didn't dream anything on earth could unseat him. Not that he got careless and didn't keep his promises—he was too good a politician for anything of that sort—but he acquired the habit of putting up business blocks on the west side and always lacked a little of paying for one.

This was mighty stimulating to his sense of thrift, but somehow it kept him constantly paring down his campaign fund until some of the young bucks in his camp, who did the heft of the hard work, got tired of this passion for economy that had gradually taken possession of Salve. Tan Finnegan was especially sore, as the alderman had turned down some of his pet schemes in the council and had refused to refund a thousand dollars that Tan had scattered along the levee in the course of the preceding campaign.

Right then and there Tan notified Salve to count him out and consider him as unattached; he might, he said, do a little work and he might conclude to go over to the enemy. "Anyhow, you'll hear from me one way or the other." Well, after the new campaign opened Tan kept mighty still and appeared to be as completely absorbed in holding his seat on the fence as a boy who is waiting for the circus parade to pass. All his interest in politics appeared suddenly to have oozed out of his toes and he was given the credit of being as disinterested a spectator of the political field as the most aristocratic millionaire-by-inheritance on Brownstone avenue.

This didn't rack Salve with grief to any great extent. Since his mania for business blocks and economy had grown on him the old alderman had come to regard Tan as a prodigiously expensive luxury. To be sure, Tan always got results; but if rentals on business property were as high as the expense of Tan's results, Salve figured he wouldn't need to stay in the council to keep his property up



Tan treated to one round of beers and solemnly handed each loafer a dime.

in good shape. So long as Tan didn't line up actively with the opposition the alderman was glad that the young ward hustler was not distributing his money.

Just the day before the election, after old Salve had looked over all his fences and pronounced his work good, Tan took $50 to the bank and had it changed into dimes. Then he started out and began to hit up the old trail, making the rounds of all the river saloons. In every one he came across a few loafers with whom he was personally acquainted. These he called up to the bar and treated them to one round of beers, while the newcomers and strangers glowered and swore in thirsty rage.

"Drink hearty," he would say, "to honest old Xavier Flynn."

But Tan's finishing touch, which marked him as a master in the creation of political discontent, was in solemnly handing a dime to every one of these loafer captains, as they were wiping their lips after the one drink, and saying:

"Now, boys, get out early and put in your

best licks for Flynn. He's got to be returned. The opposition is throwing out lots of coin to put him out of business; but he knows he can depend on you, coin or no coin!"

This sort of thing was repeated in practically every saloon in the river ward—and a trail of curses on the niggardliness of old Flynn followed from one groggery to another—for, of course, the loafers all thought Tan was still the accredited distributer for Flynn. But curses were not the only followers that Tan had. He had secretly arranged with the heelers of the opposition to make the rounds right after him and spend a dollar for every dime that had been put out in the name of old Salve. You can bet there wasn't a dry throat in any place where these heelers stopped, and instead of dealing out dimes to the loafer captains they handed over $5 bills.

Meantime Ald. Flynn was comfortably casting up his greatly reduced election expenses and was glad that Tan was not sowing his money in the barrel houses. He had weathered so many storms and turned so many sharp

corners that it didn't occur to him it was possible to unseat him. Such was his confidence in his position that, after he had been told that Tan had been out doing a little work for him, he didn't suspect that some sharp practice was going on.

Well, when the votes were counted, in that election, Salve was buried so deep that they had difficulty in finding his figures on the poll sheet. And it took the old alderman about a month to find out the real nature of the brick-bat that had hit him.

But when it comes to turning sharp corners at the eleventh hour the trick that gave Little Danny his start in politics puts all the others in the shade. Little Danny wanted to break into the council, but he lived in a strong Irish Democratic ward, where Republicans were scarce as hens' teeth, and the old alderman was up for re-election. He had the whole rolling mill influence at his back, and he made no bones of saying that so long as he had the mill foreman and bosses solid he could "yell for Queen Victoria," and still be elected.

This incidental remark reached the ears of Little Danny and he made it the subject of meditation and prayer. The more he thought about the boast the madder he was—but he had to admit that it was gospel truth so far as any election records to date could show. The night before election Little Danny had as much chance to come out with a whole skin as a sour apple in a hog pen. As he was walking the floor, jouncing a croupy baby, he suddenly saw a great light. Some say that it came so quick he dropped the baby into the coal hod, but I don't believe that, for Little Danny was never known to lose his head—and, besides, he was as tender as a woman when it came to handling a child.

But, at any rate, Little Danny turned the baby over to his wife and made a dash downtown. Between 2 and 4 in the morning, when all the world, including policemen on their beats, sleeps soundest, Little Danny made a sneak to the cottage of Big Tom, his opponent. When he left, a life size bust picture of her majesty Queen Victoria occupied the lower

sash of the alderman's front parlor window, a window in which the shade was never raised excepting on rare company occasions.

Now, this same window fronted on the street along which every hand going to and from the rolling mill must pass. Another pertinent fact which had entered into Little Danny's calculations was that just then the Irish troubles were fierce in Parliament and the old sod of the Green Isle was the scene of evictions and riots that would make the modern American strike look like a game of pingpong. A big collection for "the cause" had just been taken in the rolling mill district, and an orator, fresh from Parliament, had held a dozen "Emmet" meetings in the ward, with the result that, in the language of a mill foreman, the feeling was "right up to heat and ready to pour."

Little Danny's inspiration had taken note of all these incidentals, and he calculated that the chromo of her majesty was about as well calculated to do the pouring act as anything that could be put up in that neighborhood. With

his unfailing cunning he had also taken into account the fact that the men leaving from the night shift would vote on their way home, but that those on the day shift would be given a special " knockoff," during the day, in which to deposit their ballots. In other words, every rolling mill hand would see that picture of Victoria Regina before going to the polls. Then, too, he had put up the picture so cleverly that it looked as if hung from the inside.

When the shifts changed and the dinner pail brigade passed the alderman's house a mighty rumbling began, and it grew louder and louder as the sun rose higher. Before one of the alderman's children discovered the portrait, every loyal Irishman on the mill's pay roll had seen the picture and a good share of them had vented their wrath at the polls by a vote for Little Danny, the " opposition " candidate.

Of course, the old alderman sent his hustlers to every precinct and scattered money and explanations right and left—or at least attempted to do so. But, with all the help the big men at the mill could give him, he couldn't

Every loyal Irishman saw the picture of her Majesty, Victoria.

explain fast enough to check the landslide of votes that sent Little Danny to the council with a bigger majority than his defeated opponent had ever been able to muster.

Some experiences and observations of this kind, Ned, make me a little sensitive on the subject of sure things. When I get to feeling that there's nothing left to do but count the votes and send up the skyrockets of victory I take an extra hitch in my belt and go out to see that some frisky steer doesn't get scared at a rabbit and stampede the whole bunch at the last minute before the count.

As I said in a former letter, if you've got any sleeping to do, better stand yourself off with a few catnaps until the polls close and take your beauty slumber after the close of the celebration. I hope you'll win, for I think you deserve it, and, besides, a term or two in congress will be good for you, and your wife will enjoy it—if she spends most of the time visiting among your constituents instead of going to Washington and finding out how small a fig-

ure a green congressman cuts among the real lawmakers.

When you get down there, Ned, remember that I'm open to all the garden seeds that you can send and that I'm a redhot advocate of all the irrigation legislation that you can frame up for this part of the country.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

PAYING THE FIDDLER.

Being William Bradley's notions on the "law of compensation" in practical politics—and also the account of how old Judge Worthy Millring rendered a decision, ruled the political destinies of his district, indulged in romance and finally "settled his score with the fiddler."

CHAPTER XI.

PAYING THE FIDDLER.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

There's nothing like the whirligig of time to take the kinks out of a crooked politician. Somehow I can't quite get over the notion that, sooner or later, we have to pay the fiddler in politics as well as in other things.

However, there's a lot of powerful cunning men who've made a big killing in politics and scored their heaviest hits by doing dirt to every man that came near enough to get tarred with their stick.. These fellows don't believe in the fiddler doctrine. They seen to hold that so long as they keep their batting average up to a certain pitch they're entitled to a clean bill of exemption.

But, Ned, I can't see it that way. You've played I-spy enough in the village horse sheds to understand what I mean when I say that the man who makes his way in the game of

politics by lying, cheating, and throwing down his friends isn't justified in expecting to hear the final call of "all in free." Sooner or later he'll have to take his turn at being "it" while the others are getting even with him.

These political scamps who climb to high places on the shoulders of the men they've betrayed and then expect to escape scot free, remind me of old Benage Tew's defense of the will left by the infidel, Keth, back in Busti. The way in which the old man distributed his property—which was the largest in the township—didn't appeal to the natural heirs, in spite of the fact that, during his lifetime, they had consistently impressed the old codger with the fact that they regarded him as a moral monstrosity whose fiery calling and election were already sealed.

Consequently, the bereaved heirs went up to the county seat and took counsel of a young sprig of a lawyer, who had a reputation for being uncommonly foxy. And they came out of the conference smiling, for he told them that it would be dead easy to break the will on

the ground that the old man was of unsound mind when he made it.

"But how will you prove that?" one of the heirs had asked.

"I guess there isn't a court or a jury in this region," the lawyer had replied, "that won't accept the old man's infidelity as a proof of his mental unsoundness. All we've got to do is to establish that fact. The religious sentiment of the community will do the rest."

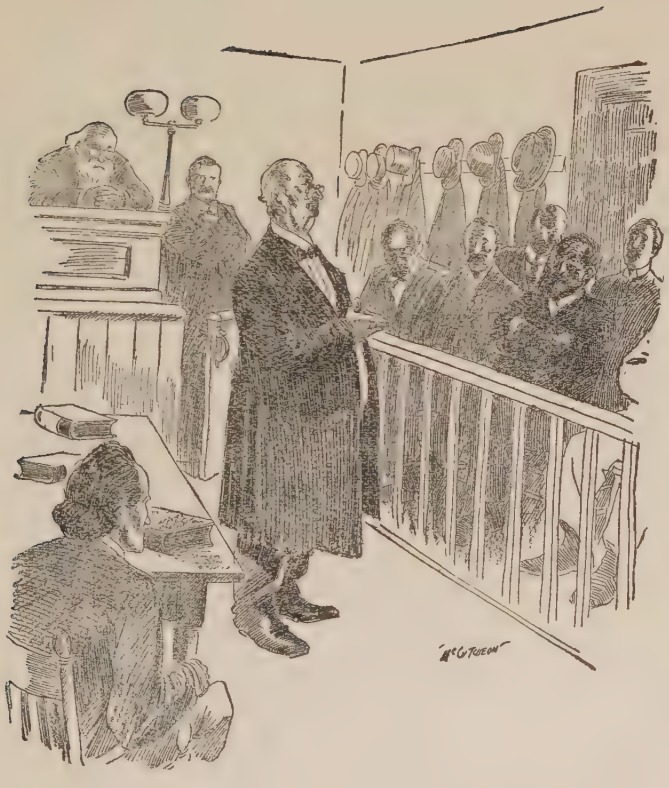
But one old friend of the deceased, who was a large beneficiary under the terms of the will, hired old Benage Tew to look over his interests in the case. Now, old Benage was as rough as a shag bark hickory but as sharp as a cooper's adz. While he knew about all the law that had ever been introduced into Cowbell county, he paid a heap more attention to the jury that he did to the law. He didn't introduce a particle of evidence to rebut or soften that establishing the rank infidelity of the deceased, and his client finally took fright and ventured to remind him of this oversight. But Benage was a hard-bitted and crusty old sin-

ner and simply told his client to " shut up. "

Right up to the last words of old Tew's speech to the jury he ignored the main issue. Then he disposed of it in these words:

" Gentlemen, it has been alleged that the testator was an infidel. I admit it. I don't hold to his views of the Deity and the future, and neither do you. But as I look into your honest and intelligent faces, I am willing to leave with you the question: Shall the maker of this last will and testament be adjudged crazy simply because he did not hold, with the persons who are seeking such a verdict, that through his lifetime a man may consistently break the ten commandments, smash the moral law into flinders, and on his deathbed assign to the Savior and cheat the devil out of his honest dues? "

It took the jury just ten minutes to bring in a verdict upholding the soundness of the will. And, Ned, I can't escape the conclusion that there's a law in the eternal fitness of things that brings the scalawag in politics around to face the music and settle with the fiddler for



Right up to the last word of Old Benage Tew's speech to the jury he ignored the main issue.

the tunes to which he has danced, just as you say the Hon. Bill has had to settle in your bailiwick.

Whenever I hear anything said about the law of compensation in politics my mind goes back to the career of Judge Worthy Millring, back in Coon county. That's while you were at college, and so I'll refresh your hearsay recollection of the affair. A finer looker than the old Judge never wore ermine or handed down an opinion. He was as tall and toppy as an elm by a meadow brook and judicial dignity hung about him like the halo of a saint in the family Bible. When he rubbed his spectacles with his silk handkerchief, after a closing argument, you felt that the voice of Justice was about to utter the last word on the subject.

But, just the same, every man who was mixed up in politics in his circuit knew, in his heart, that the old Judge had thrown down his best friends, sacrificed the men who had made him a political power, and smilingly lifted the scalps of the veterans who had been singed in fighting fire for him.

Just previous to each judicial election there was a murmur of revolt; but the old Judge smiled on the younger men of the party—the ones who really did the work—played the gallant at a few church sociables throughout his circuit, and carried the convention as easily as he decided a case. This went on until his long hair was white as his old fashioned " choker," and all thoughts of unseating him had practically been abandoned by the men who had felt his stiletto under their political ribs.

One day, however, a red-headed lawyer came to court to defend a young woman against a suit brought by her husband for the custody of their little boy. The man looked as if he'd steal the pennies out of the child's bank and beat the mother for protesting against it. You could set a dozen such heads as his on the bottom of an old fashioned sap bucket and still have room enough to play checkers.

There's no denying that the woman was uncommonly comely; but the courts in our state hadn't held that this was proof of bad character. However, the husband had enough of

Then the woman slowly arose, took the boy by the hand and walked down the aisle.

his relatives on the stand to make out a circumstantial case against her, while his lawyer made a strong point of her handsome face and her alleged weakness to flattery, insinuating that her ability to sham would make her a success on the stage. His whole contention was that the mother was an unfit person to have the custody of her child.

There was a hush in the court when the Judge polished his spectacles and gave his decision, ordering that the child be taken from the mother and given into the hands of the grandmother on the father's side. Then the woman slowly arose, took the little boy by the hand and walked down the aisle—a strange, unsteady light in her eyes. Reaching the bench fronting at one end the Sheriff's room and at the other the Judge's chamber, she dropped down and gazed vacantly about.

The Sheriff offered the little fellow an apple, and, as the child stepped forward shyly and took it, picked him up and dodged quickly into the private room, snapping the lock behind him. This aroused the woman from her stupor. She

leaped forward and fairly flung herself against the door.

Just then the old Judge stepped to the door of his chamber. With a cry the mother made a rush for him—but again threw herself against a closed door! She was beside herself when the bailiffs and her lawyer led her away. I never heard what became of her—but I can give you a few pertinent particulars about that red-headed lawyer and old Judge Millring.

The papers commented at length upon the "painful incident," but praised the "clearly judicial and impartial" nature of the decision, and added that the county was "fortunate in being able to furnish the circuit bench with so distinguished and scholarly a jurist, one that would be an ornament to the highest tribunal in the land." That was the first gun in the judicial campaign—but not the last.

The red-headed lawyer had his dander up, but kept it under cover, and started out, quietly, to make things merry for the old Judge. But that unsuspecting ornament of the bench simply continued in the even tenor of his way,

living the life of a solitary and scholarly old widower in the big mansion on the hill, cared for by a half-deaf housekeeper whose smile would have soured fresh milk.

Secretly the young lawyer organized into a band of insurgents a choice lot of the men who had been tricked, shammed and deserted by the Judge in years past. Then he bought the Blade, the new county-seat paper, published in the Judge's own town. When he had acquired the property he coyly suggested to the Judge that, as he needed a little ready money just then, he would be willing to sell a two-thirds interest. This bait caught the Judge instantly, and he drew his check for the required amount, charging it up to campaign expenses. Then he went into the city for a few days' rest, a habit he had fallen into in late years. He liked to come in contact with bright minds, he said, and keep in touch with the great world of affairs; it kept him from "getting rusty."

There was no open contest against the Judge in his own county; the new paper printed a

few columns of conventional praise of "our distinguished and learned fellow-townsman," and the red-headed lawyer rode the country picking out the delegates to the Judicial convention. He didn't claim directly to represent the Judge, and even went so far as to say that he had no objection to letting any "sorehead" in on the delegation who cared to go to the convention. This was winked at as a magnanimous and clever thing—and an amazing number of soreheads took advantage of his generosity.

The convention met on Friday, the regular publication day of the Blade being Thursday. Somehow the papers got into the postoffice uncommonly early that day and in a few hours the county was in an uproar—for the news spread like a prairie fire after a drought. In headlines printed in black handbill type, the editor announced the fact that it had been discovered that the Hon. Worthy Millring was the husband of a young woman forty years his junior and the father of a little daughter.

The wife was the daughter of a former housekeeper of the judicial mansion.

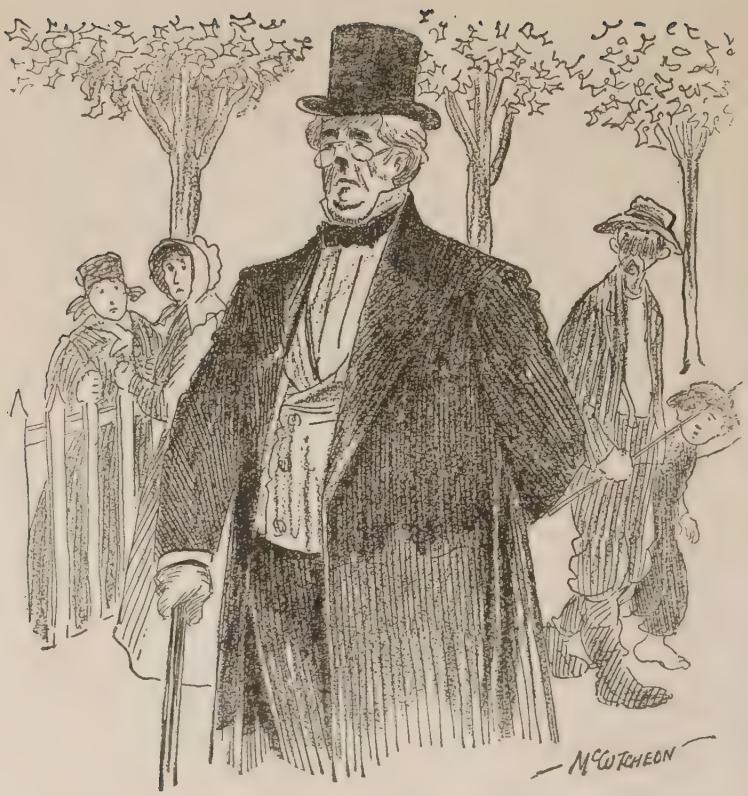
In proof of the existence of the wife, the paper published the facsimile reproduction of a registered letter receipt signed by Mrs. Worthy Millring. No comments were made aside from the simple statement that it was feared that the neighbors and political supporters of the venerable jurist would resent the fact that they had not been taken more intimately into the confidence of their distinguished fellow-townsman.

That convention was the hottest that ever convened in the county. The old Judge was full of fight. He made a bold dash to stampede the younger delegates.

"Just come over to the hotel," he told them; "meet my wife and then, if you blame me, vote against me." They accepted the challenge, met the woman—and went back to fight for the Judge. She was a city woman with a certain social grace and cleverness that dazzled the young farmers, and, for a time, it looked as if the Judge's high play would win out for him.

But a good many of the delegates had brought their wives to town with them—just to do a little shopping—and, somehow, the red-headed lawyer managed to meet most of these women and drop a word with them. And, incidentally, the convention, the stores, and the whole town generally were well supplied with handbills giving the text of the Judge's decision in which he had taken the child from the mother on the grounds of "unwholesome home influences." More than one delegate was called out of that convention by his wife—but somehow not a great many women called on the Judge's wife that first day of her appearance in local society.

In the convention the fight was something fierce. The balloting hung on until night and the insurgents forced an adjournment. That gave the wives of the delegates a chance to express their sentiments—and the next day, on the eighty-ninth ballot, there was a break in the Judge's forces and the nomination went to a dark horse candidate who was as awkward as a "pip" turkey, but straight and fairly able.



The Judge held his head up just as high as ever when he took his walks about town.

After that the old Judge grew thinner and frailer. He held his head just as high as ever when he took his dignified walks about town, but it was hard work for him to do it. His deep set eyes sunk further back into their caverns behind his bushy brows. Before the summer was over, he took to his bed and, in the language of the red-headed lawyer, "turned up his toes and submitted to the eternal decree of justice and retribution."

The politicians who, like the old Judge, made a practice of throwing dead cats in other people's wells are divided into two classes: First come those who do it from spite, because they're not allowed to draw all the water they want themselves. These are mean enough, but they don't trot in the same class with those who do it just for pure cussedness, poisoning the waters from which their friends must drink, simply because they are natural political degenerates. And it's my experience that this latter class is mainly made up of the men who prate loudest about political purity.

It's my notion that the politicians of this

stripe generally get their taste of poisoned waters before they're through with the game. And I always take a heap of comfort every time I see one of them laid out for good.

Tell the wife that if she'll cure you of politics and come out west with you there's a chance for you to make more money here and get more solid enjoyment than in holding down the fattest job in the old state.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

LANDSLIDES AND STORM CENTERS.

Containing the observations of Bill Bradley on the delights and dangers of being a "committeeman" in high authority and bossing the fight in a big campaign. Incidentally he relates how a state captain of the party hosts scared a whole commonwealth full of complacent and self-satisfied politicians, collected a campaign fund and revolutionized results.

CHAPTER XII.

LANDSLIDES AND STORM CENTERS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned: —

Your letter saying that the boys have made you national committeeman from the old state gave me a heavy jolt. I feel a good deal like the old lumberman who stood on shore and watched his son go out on the logs to break a big lumber jam. It was the lad's first star performance, and the old man remarked: "He's a fine boy and it's a fine job—but if he don't hit it right this time he'll never get back to where he can be licked for his foolhardiness."

By exerting a little brute force and awkwardness a man in almost any kind of an office can manage to make a fool of himself, but when he takes the position of state captain for the party in a national campaign he can sit still and depend upon being made a monkey of by any one of a thousand energetic hustlers in the organization who are prancing around nights,

apparently for the sole purpose of putting his foot in the situation. Compared to the opportunities open to a national committeeman, a legislator, a congressman, or even a governor, stands about as little chance to do himself harm as a boy with a bucksaw and a big wood pile.

The list of perils that pestered the Apostle Paul would look mild beside the array of pitfalls which wait for the feet of those who make straight the paths of party triumph. If the holder of an ordinary office keeps close tabs on one or two special enemies and watches his own weak points with particular care, he's comparatively safe; but the party general in a big campaign has got to dodge all the sharpshooters on the other side and give most of his time to keeping his fool friends from exploding the ammunition magazine in his own camp.

Then, again, he must have a scent for landslides and storm centers that approximates omniscience. Back in Busti I used to know a bee tree hunter who insisted that even in the dead of winter he could hear the hum of a swarm of

bees in a hollow seventy feet from the ground the minute he clapped his ear to the butt of the tree. That's the kind of an ear for trouble you've got to have, Ned, if you get through with the job you've tackled without making a mess of your political future. And right on this point of locating storm centers I want to tell you a story that, in the language of the evangelist, will " bring you to a realizing sense of your imperiled condition."

I was back in the old state then, as you know, and taking considerable notice of what was doing on the inside of politics. Little Doc, as you'll recall, was the national committeeman from our state and also state secretary of the state central committee at the time when the first free silver campaign broke loose. He had his enemies, but none of them accused him of sleeping daytimes, and I knew he was like father's old clay-bank mare in one respect —there was no evidence that he had ever laid down in his stall, in the fills, or in double harness. He was keen as a fox and had thrown

the dogs off a good many times by running on the top rail of the fence.

Those of us who were best acquainted with his habits felt mighty safe when he landed on the national committee and stood for our state in the chief councils of the party. But there were a good many of the boys down in the state who didn't take to him because his hair curled and he changed his shirt at least three times a week.

Well, anyhow, he was the captain of the party ship when the free silver flood came in. There wasn't a man in our party who didn't fairly ooze satisfaction. Our candidate had been nominated, our pet plank adopted in the platform, and the whole organization in the old commonwealth was as chesty as a peacock in Spring. One morning in June the faithful in the state were thrown into fits by an interview from our member of the national committee. The war horses of the party frothed at the mouth and pawed the air as they read the words of the Little Doc:

"Our state is the storm center of the na-

tional campaign, and we are right now in the Democratic column. If the election were tomorrow we would be beaten to the finish."

This from our member of the national committee and the general pilot of the campaign! As that interview percolated out through the state a tidal roar set towards the city and increased in volume with every passing hour. Telegrams began to pour in from the politicians in every part of the state—and a good many of them were actually paid messages. The fellows who were either big enough or little enough to speak out in meeting freed their minds, called him all kinds of "traitor" and "fool," and demanded his resignation from both national and state committees.

Inside of three days there was a bushel of letters and telegrams from all over the state, all of the writers frothing at the mouth and reaching for the scalp of the "fool committeeman" who had "disgraced the party with his blatant and cowardly nonsense." They had a great deal to say about Little Doc's suggestion that our state was the "storm center"

of the national campaign. That stuck in the crops of the whole outfit, but it especially riled the members of the state and county central committees. Somehow they seemed to consider it as a personal slap at them and they laid it down hard and fast that their rows in the party vineyard had been tended to in a way that put a short crop out of the question, regardless of weather.

Speaking moderately, the national committeeman found himself in the position of an "official forecaster," who would, on the balmiest day in June, hang out every black flag and alarm sign in the outfit and notify the public that inside of twenty-four hours there would be hail, sleet, and snow to beat Medicine Hat, and a higher speed of wind than ever swept Kansas, Missouri, or the South Seas. But all through this hubbub the Little Doc kept right on smiling—cool and happy as the cane ring fakir at a county fair. All he did was to call a meeting of the state central committee and to declare that he had been correctly quoted in the interview.

He grabbed the lapels of his coat and addressed the committee.

Up to that time a meeting of the state central committee had resembled a reunion of the Gladhand Brigade, at which the national committeeman figured as the guest of honor. But this time, when the wheel horses came in from the four corners of the commonwealth, they didn't pound the Little Doc on the back quite as hard as usual. He was just as bright and chipper as if he didn't know that they were going to ask his head on a salver in the course of the immediate proceedings. He represented the First district, and when the ball opened remarked:

"As I seem to have said too much already, you may pass right on to other brethren and hear their reports on the condition of the work. Perhaps some of them may wish to ask a few questions. Then I might like to make some inquiries of them. We'll all feel free to speak right out and unburden our souls."

Nick Snively, a banker from a country district, was the first one called on. He licked his lips and smiled as he grabbed the lapels of his coat and addressed the committee:

"Gentlemen: So far as my district is concerned, I am proud to give an emphatic denial to the strange and alarming rumors that have become current as to the condition of the party. You may rely upon the old Second district to roll up her usual majority for the party. She has never failed yet and with the splendid platform and candidate with which we go before the people, I regard the battle as already won."

A general smile passed round the long table as Snively sat down, and the lawyer from the Third was called on to give his testimony. There were several large manufacturing towns in his district, and only once in the history of the state had it gone Democratic. He was spoken of as a "bright man" and a "good talker."

"Friends," he said, as he slipped the fingers of his right hand in their accustomed place between the second and third buttons of his Prince Albert coat, "I have searched the Third district from Coon creek to Scrub Oaks hills, and from Prairie Center to Cottonwood Corners, looking for a storm center. There isn't

one in the district unless it's in the icehouses on Clear lake." This brought a round of laughter, and the witty lawyer continued: "Down in our part of the state it has never been necessary to cry 'Wolf! Wolf!' in order to get out the vote. We follow the even tenor of our way and come up with a solid front for the party when the polls open. This time will be no exception. The substantial men of the party, the leaders of public opinion, are enthusiastic for the candidates, and the principles with which we appeal to the voters."

"You don't think, then, that the free silver heresy has made any inroads into the party ranks in your bailiwick?" meekly inquired Little Doc.

"No, emphatically no!" responded the lawyer with smiling dignity.

Then the national committeeman turned to Snively and asked: "You don't feel that the people of your district are sitting up nights to worry about the crime of '73?"

"I should say not," he answered. "Calam-

ity howlers are scarce down our way. We haven't gone stark crazy if——"

"If I have," interrupted the Little Doc. "Well, gentlemen, I'm going to make a few statements right here. If you go home and any of you find things different than what I say—then you can have my resignation from both the committees on which I am serving. Right in Nick Snively's district there are three Silver Republican clubs; one has 306 members, another 248, and another 160. Every member is pledged to vote for Bryan and free silver. Of course, they're secret organizations, but I'll give Mr. Snively a list of their meeting places and all the other vital statistics so that he can check me up and get my resignation."

Then the Little Doc turned to Lawyer Pratt and said: "You don't seem to have an eye for storm centers. Just go over your district with this list and you'll find seven good sized ones—and they're growing steadily. They're more Silver Republican clubs—and if you don't get busier than a boy killing snakes they'll make your election returns look like the report from

a banner district in Mississippi. But there are other districts a whole lot worse than yours."

"I don't believe——" interrupted Snively, and the lawyer cut in with, "How do you know?"

"When we get all the testimonies in," answered the Little Doc, "I'll tell you—for you have a right to know. But I insist that every man shall make the report which he came into this meeting intending to make."

The others didn't put on the enthusiasm pedal quite so thick as the first ones, but they stuck to it that party sentiment was "strong and healthy," and that their districts could be "counted on to roll up good majorities for McKinley and sound money." Then the national committeeman told just how many weak spots he could put his finger on in that particular territory, and he closed the argument by telling the men who had joined in the cry for his resignation that if they didn't stir up things from one end of the state to the other the whole campaign would be lost and the responsibility would rest on their shoulders.

After that he explained how he found out that Coin Harvey's book had supplanted the family Bible in thousands of Republican homes, and that the crime of '73 and the doctrine of redemption by free silver had crowded out the old orthodox plan of salvation. Without consulting any one he had sent out to every county of the state a picked man whose ostensible business was to gather up crop statistics, but who talked politics with every man he came across. These men made daily reports, mailing them to a certain lock box in the city.

In a few days he found that the deep chested satisfaction of the faithful was blind belief and had no connection with observation of actual conditions. After he had heard from every county and knew that enough Republicans had "gone silver" to spell defeat the Little Doc gave out his famous interview.

When that meeting broke up the members were a well scared bunch, but the fright didn't strike clear in until they began to dig into the holes the Doc had marked and verify his state-

Coin Harvey's book had supplanted the family Bible in thousands of Republican homes.

ments. Most of the committeemen found the Silver Republican clubs had grown in numbers and membership.

Before, it had been impossible to raise a campaign fund, and many had said: "What's the use? It's simply throwing it away to spend it for what's a cinch anyway." After the scared committeemen had carried the news of the storm center among their people you couldn't keep the contributions away with an army with banners. The money rolled in. But the Little Doc had the same fight to arouse the members of the national committee that he had in his own state. Finally, however, he got them on the run, and whenever they could see a storm center they went after it hard. And instead of being called upon to resign the Little Doc was the king pin in the situation and the man to whom Uncle Mark Hanna went when he suspected that the mists of prejudice or complacency were obscuring his vision and preventing him from spotting a storm center moving down from the Medicine Hat of political obscurity.

And so, Ned, if you're going to run the national campaign in your next year don't let the assurances of the country members lull you into complacency; keep both eyes and both ears open for the signs of the times; put your ear to the butt of every tree that could possibly hold bees and listen for a buzzing sound from higher up; take a crop census and find out for sure what kind of scheme of salvation is being warmed over at the family stove-hearth of the common people.

All this is only another way of saying: Look out for landslides. The uncertainty of their appearance is as sure as that of the coming of the Lord—they are bound, as I've said before, to drop in " at a moment when ye think not," and " like a thief in the night."

I have been dug out of the edge of one or two landslides, and I can testify that nothing in my experience ever gave me anything like the same feeling excepting being hit in the stomach with a baseball batted by a blacksmith's apprentice. And as far as that goes, Ned, the red schoolhouse issue put you on the

shelf for a term—at least that's the way you look at it.

Perhaps you never heard the true inwardness of that campaign which precipitated the worst landslide in the history of the old state. There was some apparent dissatisfaction with a school bill that the Governor had signed, but none of the politicians paid any attention to that for the reason that every religious denomination touched by it had been represented in the commission that prepared the measure. Of course, the Governor had signed it and thought that he would never again hear from it, as it was an agreed bill. But when he was renominated the parochial school teachers camped on his trail and made it some hot for him.

But, on the other hand, I never saw such meetings as the Governor had that campaign. When we struck the city we had fairly to blindfold him in order to make him take in all the meetings scheduled. His old army wound got to hurting him after he had done about so much and he'd balk right in the shafts and re-

fuse to budge. "All right," we'd say, "this is your campaign. If you don't care about being Governor again we'll be glad to call the campaign off right here. But if you'd like to go back to the mansion there are several thousand men with votes waiting to see you at the meetings ahead of us. Better drop in and see them."

This brought him to his senses and he greeted the boys like a lost brother just returned from the war.

When the votes were in, we felt that the count was a good deal of a formality, and we put in more time figuring out how the patronage in the state would be parceled out than we did in worrying over the result. But when the returns began to come in we felt as if the top of Pike's Peak had landed us. Everybody shouted: "The little red schoolhouse did it!" And they have kept up that cry ever since, without stopping to figure that the Governor ran far ahead of our national ticket. He simply got in the way of a landslide that started at the Homestead mills instead of a red schoolhouse.

A RETIRED POLITICIAN

So far as I've been able to learn, the geological experts of politics haven't given out any authoritative work on "The Law of Landslides," and the campaign weather department is a little behind on the handbook of "How to Locate Storm Centers."

When these two things are figured out to a cocksure scientific certainty there'll be about as little fun in playing politics as in shaking with loaded dice. Without an occasional upheaval in the midst of a calm, politics would become a business instead of the greatest game that an American gentleman and others are privileged to play.

The campaign manager who can't see trouble coming across several states is as poor a politician as he who thinks that nothing of great consequence, good or bad, can start in his own commonwealth.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

THE GLAD-HAND BRIGADE.

In which William Bradley tells a pointed story of the poker table and cautions Ned against the conclusion that there is a bass under every lily pad or a friendly vote behind every glad hand.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GLAD-HAND BRIGADE.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

It's mighty good of you to come straight out and say that whenever we've had a friendly difference you've found, finally, that I was in the right of it. That reminds me of an episode that occurred when I was in the Senate. In a little joint session of select members representing both houses a dispute arose. The youngest man in the bunch, who was being tried out by the old hands, was hot about his point of the contention, and was putting up a spirited argument when in came Senator Bill, who had been raised in a Mississippi river tavern and learned poker from the great masters on the old time steamboats.

"Look here," suggested one of the players, "Billy knows more about poker than any of us'll ever learn if we sacrifice all our salary

and perquisites on the altar of the kitty. I move that we leave it to Billy."

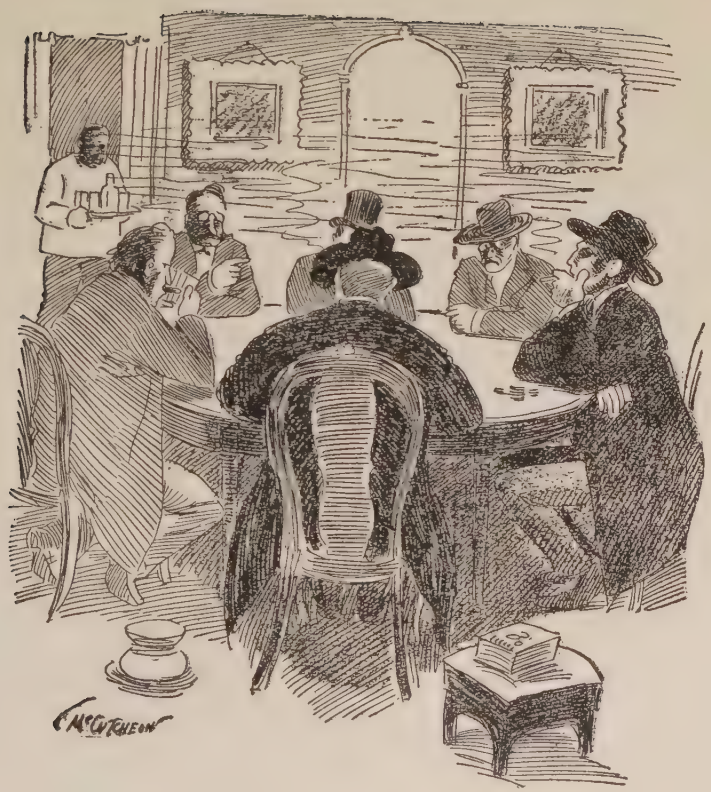
"All right," said the new man, turning to the referee. "I contend, Senator, that the ante man has the right to raise the pot before the draw. Am I right, sir?"

"The chair decides that you are right," was Billy's prompt answer, and the game proceeded.

But every few minutes the new man who had been sustained by the referee would pound the table and declare: "Didn't I tell you I was right?" After awhile he began to contend for other points with the argument: "There you go again! Same old thing! Can't you see I'm right? Didn't the Senator say I was right?"

There was more and more of this sort of thing until it grew monotonous. Finally the Senator, who had stood it as long as he could, broke out and exclaimed:

"Look here, young man. Don't get it into your head that, just because you've been right



"I move we leave it to Senator Billy; he knows more about poker then we'll ever learn."

once, you're entitled to get noisy and be a d—d fool for the remainder of your life."

Now, Ned, because you are big and broad enough to declare me in the right I'm not going to keep on pounding the table forever and claiming that I can't be wrong in any position. But I can't help remarking that there are a lot of men in politics who, because they have happened to be right once or twice, feel that they're entitled to act like fools for the remainder of their lives.

There is just one point, Ned, on which I must put all the emphasis of a sad experience, starting with the board of supervisors and trailing along through the city council, the legislature, the lower house of Congress, the Governor's chair, and the United States Senate: "Put not your trust in the Gladhand Brigade" —and especially in that contingent of it that has to have its palms crossed with silver before the charm will work.

The candidate for office who counts his strength by the number of glad hands he gets in that campaign is a good deal like the angler

who figures out the catch of black bass he's going to make by the number of lily pads in sight. And sometimes it takes a long while for men of a trusting and buoyant temperament to learn that there isn't an available black bass under every lily pad or a friendly vote behind every glad hand.

According to my classification, the Gladhand Brigade is cut up into traitors, trimmers, drifters, and stayers. You must have the stayers to draw in the drifters and the trimmers; the traitors you could get along without—but never do! The drifters and the trimmers are fair weather fowls, and if you're caught in a storm look out for a scattering.

When anybody brings up the subject of the Gladhand Brigade I always recall what Gen. Logan said to me one time when we happened to meet in New York. He was on his way to Washington to take his seat in the Senate, to which he had just been elected after a fierce fight and a deadlock lasting about six months. He brushed back his splendid black hair, in his quick way, and said:

"Yes, Bill, I'm going back. There'll be a brass band and a lot of job holders waiting with glad hands at the station to meet me. But somehow it won't go to the spot as it used to. You may have forgotten it, Bill, but I was once the Republican candidate for the Vice-Presidency. Right after the convention that nominated Mr. Blaine and myself I went back to Washington, as I had been in the habit of doing, quietly sending word to my private secretary on what train I should arrive. That was all I thought about the matter until I got into the station and heard the bands begin to play some unprophetic airs of the 'Conquering Hero' stripe. Several thousand department clerks gave me the glad hand until my arm ached, and then I was escorted, to slow music, back to the hotel.

"Somehow, Bill, that made my foolish old heart feel kind of good. Just then the thought that every one of those fellows had an ax to grind did come to me, but I cursed my own cynicism and said: 'Yes, but they're American citizens; they're my kind of folks and I've

no right to think their gladness isn't genuine.' This was the way in which I reasoned with myself as I was being driven in the carriage of honor."

"Well," continued Senator Logan, "after that presidential campaign was over and Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Hendricks had begun making history, I found it necessary to go back to Washington again and clean things up ready for retirement. As usual, I wired my private secretary to meet me at a certain train. Somehow, as I stood on the station platform, searching in vain for my secretary, I couldn't help thinking how different the landscape looked from what it did the last time I had stepped off the train and heard the yells of thousands.

"Of course, all that might be naturally accounted for; no doubt the boys were considerably depressed at the prospect of losing their scalps, and perhaps they thought that brass bands might jar my nerves after the protracted excitement of the campaign. But if there had been just a few—say, two or three of the boys who were closest to me—there to meet me at

the station the future wouldn't have seemed half so dark or the unselfishness of the race so doubtful. When your private secretary forgets the train at which he is to meet you, make up your mind that public sentiment on the score of your usefulness and general consequence has touched the freezing point.

"But, now that I'm again in position to scratch backs and indorse applications, you will see that my ride from the station'll not be as lonesome as it was last time. I'll be met by a brass band and a thousand clerks."

That night I had a telegram from Logan which read: "Two bands, 5,000 clerks in line. Secretary on board before wheels stopped moving."

However, Ned, it doesn't do to get sour and persuade yourself that there's no balm in Gilead and no such thing as disinterested loyalty in the world of glad hands.

When I was a boy our folks used to put me through an annual week of prayer revival season, and it always resulted in giving me the feeling that everything was going to the bow-

wows anyhow, and that man was the only mistake the Almighty had ever made. I used to grow thin and peaked under the pressure of this sort of religious pessimism, until my father would say: "Now, son, just laugh a little and turn your liver over! It's a good thing to face the serious side of life, but when you've gone around for a month with the book of Ecclesiastes written on your face and the feeling in your heart that everybody ought to be damned right away, then you'd better remember your mother and Aunt Jane and a few other good folks and cheer up."

So it is on the question of the Gladhand Brigade. I always feel like tempering my general attitude with a remembrance of a few good folks. There was little Jimmy Sands, for instance. You knew him. He rode my district over, the first time I ran for Congress, and when I tried to hand him something for his actual expenses he looked really hurt and said he wasn't doing things on that basis. Of course, the thought did come to me: "That man'll strike me heavy for some good job that'll

"Now, son, just laugh a little and turn your liver over."

be harder to give than money." But in the scramble of a hot campaign for a big place, and a new one, a man grabs at every straw that comes his way, without stopping to look at the price mark, so I not only accepted Jim's help at the time but routed him out at any time of night that the good of the cause demanded.

But that wasn't all. I mortgaged every postmastership in the district and every other scrap of patronage that by any possibility could come my way. If some of my promises overlapped a little I just told the boys that it was my first fling at the game, and that in the excitement of the moment I must have dealt the same card twice! But, anyhow, I calculated I'd make good some way in the general settlement. And I did! But by the time I had worked that puzzle out I had added ten years to my age and used up every scrap of patronage that could be raised by haunting the executive office and the departments until they began to call me the Importunate Widow. However, I landed all who could prove that I had made them any sort of promise. But there wasn't even

an empty honor for steadfast Jimmy Sands. I tried to make myself think that perhaps he didn't want anything, and that if he had he would have asked for it. There wasn't a harder job in connection with that first congressional campaign than dreading to have it out with Jimmy. At last, however, I faced the music, called him, and explained that I had been trying to cover a six foot bed of promises with a five foot patchwork quilt of offices. Jimmy looked a little solemn and admitted that if he had been offered something that wasn't above his grade in education he wouldn't have refused it. "But," he added, "I didn't ask you for anything, Bill."

That was all right until I came to hustle for re-election. Of course, I wanted to be returned worse, if anything, than I had wanted to go just once in the first place—"had important work to finish," as the local paper said. In other words, I felt a failure to go back would mean disgrace. Consequently, I needed the help of every stanch friend like Jimmy Sands more than ever. Lots of gladhanders had given me

just as good assurances that they were "all right and satisfied" as had Jimmy, and had then gone over to the opposition. But when I made my appeal to him he turned up at headquarters.

"You remember, Jimmy," I said, "how it was last time that you were left out in the cold." "But," he said, "I didn't ask you for anything. My fault, wasn't it?"

Then I waited for him to come forward with a plain proposal as to what he should have this time. He said nothing, however—simply took off his coat and went to work. All through that campaign I said to the boys in the organization: "There's just one office that I'm going to keep to play with. It's a matter of sentiment, and if I can't win without mortgaging that, then I'll lose. But I won—and I waited to see how long it would take Jimmy Sands to come forward and ask for the reward of an unobtrusive stayer.

He didn't come, however—even after some of the best appointments in the district had been given out. Then I landed his appoint-

ment to a place that paid him ten times what he had been earning and made him a king among his fellows. Jimmy Sands would have had his hand cut off without wincing, I imagine; but he bawled good when I broke the news to him at him own home—and how his little wife did hug him!

But you really don't get the full force of the Gladhand Habit until you get into the Senate. When I made the race there was one politician with a weazel face and a neck about half the length of his arm who was a trimmer from wayback, but he had some influence. He'd sneak around and meet me on the sly, protesting that he was for me, "heart and soul"—but you couldn't drag him into my headquarters. He played safety from start to finish, but I worried along and landed without his help.

I hadn't any more than taken the oath of office and warmed my seat in the Senate, when his card was sent in to me.

"Senator," he said, blinking his bright little eyes and dipping his long neck, "I've come to ask you for the postmastership in my city."

"And your indorsement?" I asked.

"I don't think you will need any other proof of my loyalty than this," he replied, taking from his pocket a carbon copy of the message of congratulation he had sent me four hours after my election.

"That office," said I, "is worth $10,000 a year and there are just twenty-nine applicants for it. Every one of them camped in my headquarters and sat up nights for me. They weren't afraid to be caught wearing my campaign button. Now, I have on file just 589 telegrams of congratulations sent by people who actually were on my side before the final ballot. The man who gets that job you're after is the one who's after your political scalp, and he's going to get it if I can help him—for he's not a coward or a trimmer, and he doesn't keep carbons of his congratulatory telegrams."

Above all, Ned, set it down in red letters that the man who comes to you and asks money for his time hasn't influence enough to make his time worth anything. The only thing he's good for is to tell the rest of the honey bees

where your bank account is. I've lined too many bee trees not to know how that plan works. Just put out some sweets on a shingle and in a minute a few bees will light. Right away every one of them will return with mates. That's the way bee trees are located, and the only thing that the grafting politician has in common with a worker bee is the habit of bringing others back with him to fill up. Turn down all the fellows who come to you straight for money. They're dear at any price.

Yours ever,

William Bradley.

FIGHTS AND FEUDS.

Being a few remarks and a story by William Bradley on the usefulness of bull courage in politics and the sores that come from the kind of man who feeds on fights and feuds and loves to display his nerve better than a pretty matron loves to show her dimples.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIGHTS AND FEUDS.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

Bull courage has its place in politics, but unless liberally served with brains it's a mighty dangerous commodity to have lying around loose in any political camp. The powder magazine or the dynamite cellar is the only safe place for the kind of political nerve that feeds on riot and rebellion and hungers for fights between meals.

If I am not mistaken, Ned, your chief lieutenant is richly gifted with this sort of capacity for trouble and I want to give you a jolt that'll open your eyes before you put him in a place where he'll make a magnificent display of his surplus courage and leave you with a feud on your hands that can't be lived down in the course of a natural lifetime.

There are some politicians—and some strong ones, too—who would rather stand pat

in a wrong cause and bullyrag and face down a righteous majority in a convention, or a House, than to be right from the very start, and win out without any fight at all. And those are the men who, in a day, manage to infect a political camp with more sores than all the salves of diplomacy can heal in a quarter of a century.

When you find a politician who likes to display his steel-wire nerve better than a pretty matron loves to show her dimples, just cross him off your slate of possible campaign managers. The man who has a secret passion for playing the Mephistopheles of the Imperturbable Countenance will indulge in this piece of dramatics at the most expensive moment, so far as the interests of his associates are concerned.

Every man has his particular soft spot, and the special besetting weakness of the sort of politician who appears to be an intellectual marvel and an emotional immune is generally this tendency to make a show of his magnificent nerve. His only fear is that he may be

thought capable of being afraid; his vanity is that of proving himself recklessly indifferent to the rights and opinions of others; his one vulnerable spot is his imperturbability.

A bag of wet sand is a soft and yielding thing alongside a stick of hard timber. But a lot of us old soldiers can testify that sacks of soggy sand will stop more bullets than a barricade of hickory logs. And in politics, the man who has enough "give" in his makeup to be thoroughly human is less liable to stir up eternal enmities than the man who wears his face like a mask and would sooner appoint an enemy to office than allow an emotion to show itself on the front side of his countenance.

Perhaps you think I'm harping pretty strong on the subject of belligerent nerve; but I once had this view of the matter rubbed into me in a way that was considerably illuminating. It was on the occasion of the first congressional convention I ever attended that this lesson was brought home to me in a way that raised my hair and made me think, for the time be-

ing, that life in a frontier army post in the Indian country would be safe and peaceful pastime compared with politics.

The row began, in the old district where I had been brought up, with the determination of a gritty young lawyer with green eyes and an ambition like Lucifer the Son of the Morning, to unseat old Gen. Harnsworth, who had been the representative for so long that he had become a statesman and fallen into the habit of forgetting to take care of the boys who were hungry for fat jobs.

These soreheads concluded that the time had come to elect a politician instead of a statesman, and so they started out to run a still-hunt in the town caucuses. The old general had held the whip hand so long that most of the stanch party men had been awed into the conviction that he was a sort of Gibraltar in a political landscape and could not be ousted by any sort of an earthquake; consequently they were in a position of a lot of unruly schoolboys who would like to throw out the schoolmaster, but didn't dare to tackle him.

The caucus was called in Cy Waite's little lumber office.

Probably the revolt would have died out right at the start if it hadn't been for a few hotheads who led the opposition at Blackberry Corners. The caucus was called in Cy Waite's little lumber office and Squire Sparks, the leader of the regulars, opened proceedings with a few facetious remarks that rubbed the fur the wrong way of the grain. Then a resolution was offered extolling the services of the distinguished statesman who had so long and ably represented the district in the national house of representatives and instructing the delegates to use "every honorable means" to secure his renomination.

Every man in the opposition had a mighty strong pair of lungs and used them to full capacity in trying to yell down the resolution. But the Squire declared it carried and then announced that the room would be cleared and the ballot box be placed in the open window to receive the ballots for delegates.

Before the boys of the opposition could fairly catch their breath they were shoved out of the office and the door locked behind them.

This was too much for the fiery temper of Patrick Henry Huggins, editor of the local paper and head and front of the opposition forces. He rallied his braves in the harness shop and after three minutes of consultation he led a flying wedge that would have sent a modern football team to the hospital for repairs, drove through the crowd around the lumber office, kicked in the door himself, and grabbed the ballot box.

Five minutes later the soreheads were holding a caucus of their own in the tavern, where they elected a full set of delegates, who were sworn not to eat or sleep until they had " killed Paul." In other words, their dander was up to white heat, their war paint on, and they started out to ride the country and get the old General's scalp. This little scrap was the spark in the tinder box and fired an amount of opposition sentiment which had not been thought possible by the regulars.

One cunning old fox who had long nursed the feeling that his influence and importance had not been properly recognized by the old

General told the boys to do the hustling and he would sit still in his office, do a little plain thinking, and see if he couldn't stack the cards in a way that would bring results.

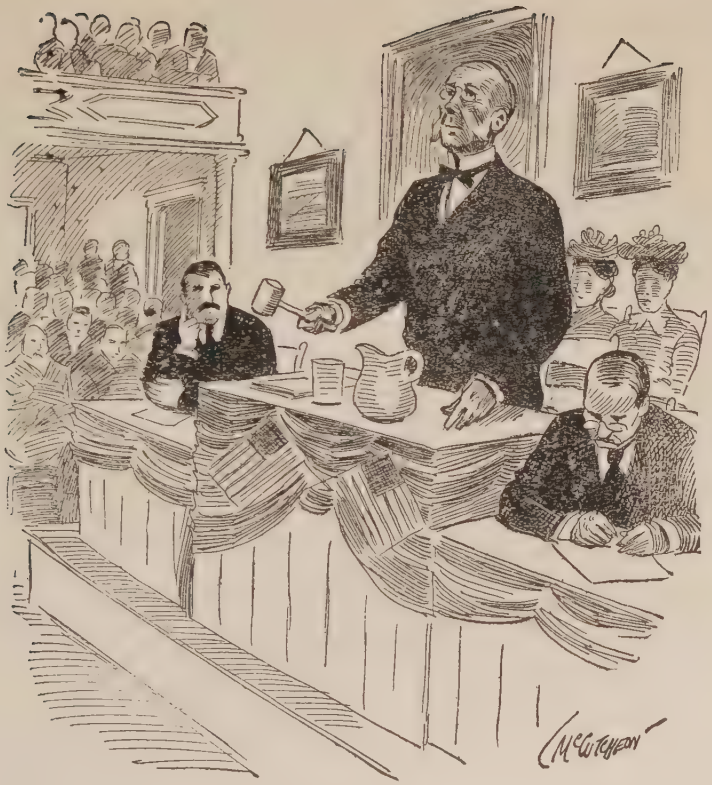
After due deliberation he decided that there was just one man in the county who was equal to the job that the opposition had in hand, for the reason that his nerve was sublime and he loved to fight a hopeless majority better than an old hound loves to follow a trail.

This man was old Hiram Bonney, banker, note shaver, and professional philanthropist. He had been too busy for some years collecting interest and cutting coupons to take any active part in politics, but after the situation was carefully explained to him he decided that here was a chance for some tall fun, and an opportunity to show the people that he was not made of mush if he did devote a considerable part of his time to building hospitals and orphan asylums. Consequently he smilingly agreed to do the work cut out for him provided he should be made chairman of the convention.

Because of his social standing, his financial prominence, and his presumably neutral position in politics, the regulars readily agreed to the proposition that he should be named as temporary chairman of the convention. As the regulars composed fully three-fourths of the delegates they had not the slightest fear that they would fail to have their own way from start to finish.

The proceedings were as smooth as a rainy day session of a Sunday school until the committee on credentials brought in its report. As its chairman sat down the editor from Blackberry Corners arose to his feet, held up in his hand a paper, and began to stammer something which even those nearest him could not understand.

Right at that instant my eyes were studying the serene face of the philanthropic chairman. Except for a peculiar light that suddenly flashed up in his eyes and the shadow of a smile playing about the corners of his lips his countenance did not show the slightest change as



At that instant my eyes were studying the serene face of the philanthropic chairman.

he quietly interrupted the delegate with the question:

"Do you move that the names that you have read be substituted for those previously offered by the committee on credentials?"

"Yes," shouted back the delegate, who was answered by a second from another part of the hall.

With a smile on his lips and a gleam of hate in his eyes that made me think of Dore's picture of the devil, the chairman put the resolution to vote. The shout of the "nays" made the room shake and demonstrated that the regulars were in immense majority, but, in a voice as clear and serene as if he were leading family prayers, the chairman announced: "The ayes have it; the resolution is carried."

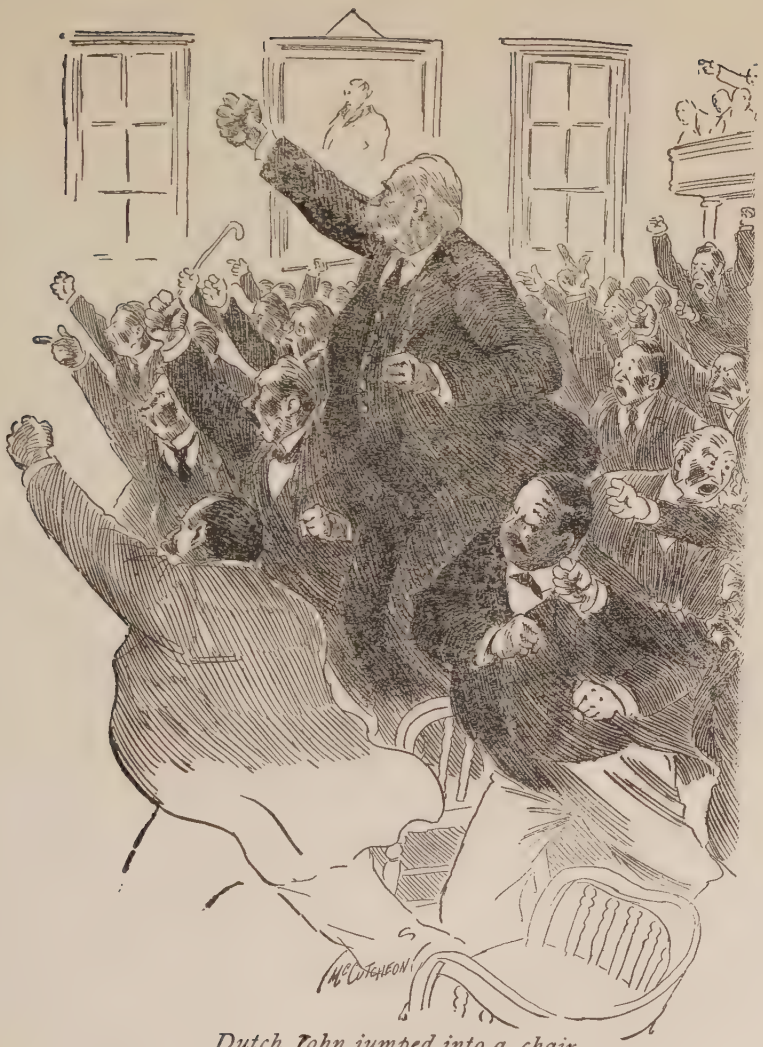
Instantly the convention was changed into a human cyclone. Every delegate was on his feet and the whole assemblage crowded forward toward the speaker. Big Tom Fairfield, who stood 6 feet 4 in his stockings and weighed about 300 pounds, made a dash for the chairman, swinging his fists and yelling: "Mob

the scoundrel! Throw him out!" Dutch John, the boss of Little Germany, jumped into a chair and began to talk in English—but the words would not come fast enough, so he harangued the chair in his native tongue.

Just at that minute I chanced to notice that the sheriff, a brother-in-law of the chairman, stepped quickly to the platform, stood close to the distinguished philanthropist, and reached his right hand around to his own hip pocket. The mob in front of the chairman also noticed this ominous move and fell back a little.

The convention was still a howling rage; a dozen men near me were actually sobbing and cries of: "Kill him! Pound him! Mob him!" came from the frenzied regulars. The only man not beside himself was the chairman, who instantly put through a motion that the temporary organization of the convention be made permanent.

Well, Ned, to make it short, the man of the iron nerve made a new congressman, a new state senator, and a new machine, but not one



Dutch John jumped into a chair and harangued the chairman in his native tongue.

of them lasted beyond a single term. He made something else, however, that has lasted more than twenty years. The party feud he started that day has never been healed and bids fair to survive unto the second and third generations. To be sure, the old man made party history with a vengeance and gave himself a notorious place in the political traditions of the district for time to come, but most of the men who were mixed up in that fight have ever since been busy trying to square themselves with the people and live down their indiscretion.

But just as sure as one of them shows his head in a hunt for office some one with a long memory comes forward and remarks that " the ayes have it." That settles him.

This, and a score of other expressions along the same line, make me a little cautious about giving full rein to a man whose vanity is along the line of his nerve. Just a simple little fight in politics is all right and adds spice to the game, but a feud that rankles for a quarter of a century is a good thing to steer clear of. So I repeat, don't give your belligerent lieutenant

a chance to show off his bull courage at the price of perpetual enmity that will be visited upon your head instead of his own.

Yours, as ever,

William Bradley.

TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

Wherein the old Governor squares himself for harsh words about the honor of legislators and draws a distinction illustrated by an experience that once "cut close to the bone" and left a scar.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

I'm a little surprised that you should hark back to one of my old letters and confess that you have kept a sore feeling simmering away under your wishbone all these weeks. I thought you knew me better than that, Ned.

And so you resent my statement that I'd rather have a son of mine caught stealing scab sheep than see him elected to a legislature? Well, perhaps that was putting it strong. In fact, I'll admit that I did bear down hard on a whole lot of good men when I bunched the entire legislative field in that sort of an omnibus knock.

Only the young reformer, in the first intoxication of his own eloquence, is entitled to the lofty privilege of lumping humanity into two classes and then taking his place with the sheep while he makes moral faces at the goats. As

I never traded much in reform stock of the professional sort, I'll not begin at this late day to pick up their tricks or preach their sermons. I stand corrected for too broad a conclusion and failing to draw the distinction that excepts a respectable number of square and honest lawmakers from the moral bats who somehow manage to sneak in under every statehouse dome and give a bad name to the legislative schools in which such men as Jefferson, Clay and Lincoln had their schooling for a bigger field.

But you can't understand how the word "legislature" riles me without knowing of one or two experiences that burned themselves into my recollection when I first went down to the assembly with the notion that I was honored by a trusting constituency and was going to work with a bunch of picked men for the best interests of the old state. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night and look back upon one or two of those legislative scenes until my eyes swim and my teeth grit!

I've never yet put into cold words the one experience that cut me closest, but I guess it's time I did, for you can't get my viewpoint on this legislative business without it. And there's no use claiming that there was any novelty in what I went through, for the same sort of a proceeding had been repeated, with variations, under the shade of every statehouse in the land. But to the story:

You were at home that session holding down the sheriff's office, but you will remember that the corporations made the great fight that winter to break down the bars on the franchise question. It was war to the hilt, and the Philippine "water cure" was a mild and Christian method compared with the tactics which the corporations put into play from the time the speaker took his chair and named the committees.

Three schoolboys couldn't have made up to each other quicker than Big Ed Hammer and Gentleman Joe Tolliver and I got together. Ed was a veteran—as sound and square as a marble obelisk; Joe, like myself, was in his

maiden term. The minute I caught the sparkle in the tail of Joe's eye I knew he was my sort, and Big Ed seemed to feel the same way. And, besides, a mutual friend had told Ed: "You take these two youngsters under your wing, give 'em as good a show as you can, and see that they don't get into mischief."

Joe had the winsomeness of a modest and tactful woman, with a clear and nimble mind, that marked him as a thoroughbred. Every quality he showed was of a sort to mark him as a gentleman and draw me closer to him. It didn't take me long to learn that time isn't the main factor in forming a friendship; that you can get nearer to a man in meeting him every day for three months and fighting battles shoulder to shoulder with him than you could in fifteen years of casual contact under commonplace circumstances, and that strong attachments, like fierce enmities, are things of swift growth in the strain and stress of legislative life.

From the start Ed, Joe, and I acted together, had adjoining rooms, and were as thick as three

"In fact, the boys soon began to call us The Three Brothers."

peas in a pod. In fact, the boys soon began to call us the Three Brothers. We didn't object to being bunched in this way and accepted the title without protest. But the most comfortable and important basis of our little three cornered brotherhood was the fact that we seemed to size up the right and wrong of things in about the same way. And it doesn't take a guide post or a special spiritual adviser to point a man to the right road in lawmaking any more than in plain business of any sort. All he has to do is to settle it with himself, right at the start, that he is going to be absolutely square, without any ifs or ands, and then stick to this through thick and thin. But if he doesn't draw the reins tight at the start and if he allows that he will treat every proposition that comes up individually he can depend upon it that he's likely to do a lot of sidestepping before he is through with the game.

We talked all this over one night together in Ed's room, and he laid down the law in this way: "When a fellow makes it up with himself that he's going to stick to the straight

track from one end to the other without asking his conscience for any special orders to side track or lay over he'll pull through all right. That's the schedule I've always traveled on, boys, and I'm mighty glad to find that you're inclined to run on the same orders."

Big Ed was the head and front of the opposition to the franchise forces, and, although we were only cubs, Joe and I were commonly regarded as his first lieutenants, in a way. Day and night we worked together, sifting out the sheep from the goats and building up an organization that would stick together to the last ditch. It was harder work than holding a plow on a New Hampshire hillside, but Big Ed was heart and soul in the fight and threw his whole being into it. Every night we got together and counted noses. Sometimes this was a mighty solemn proceeding, because now and then the enemy snatched a man from our forces.

But occasionally there was a season of rejoicing in our camp when we were able to

"There was Joe—but of all the besotted specimens of drunken humanity I ever beheld he was the worst."

snatch a brand from the burning by convincing a weak-kneed fence straddler that he couldn't afford to trifle with temptation or do anything short of enlisting with the boodle fighters.

All through these ups and downs Ed, Joe, and I stood together like the three legs of a tripod, without a shadow of difference coming between us.

The first of the two big boodle bills was close up to a third reading as I entered the house one morning to begin the day's struggle with more courage than I had been able to scrape up since the long battle began. Joe's seat was almost across the aisle from my own, and as I turned to speak to him I saw a sight that made my eyes start and my flesh creep.

There was Joe—but of all the draggled, besotted, and filthy specimens of drunken humanity that I ever beheld he was the worst. I felt as if I had been hit between the eyes with a sledge. For a few minutes I couldn't have told, to save me, the name of any man sitting

five feet in front of us. Just as I began to recover my senses a little from the shock Big Ed came in, took one look at the Little Brother, as we sometimes called Joe, and winced as if he had been stabbed.

Of course, we had him taken out and carried to his room, but from that minute he slunk away from us whenever he could get a chance. Our little brotherhood was broken, and he avoided us as consistently as he had formerly stood by us.

Although Ed and I put in as much time trying to get Joe sobered up as we did in carrying on the fight against the corporation bills in the house, he did not see a single rational hour.

It was as idle to attempt to reason with Joe in his transformed and besotted state as to argue with a crazy Indian. He was seldom in his seat in the house and spent most of his time in the " Black Lodge," the center of the spider web which the agents of the franchise interests threw out in every direction to catch their victim.

One day while Joe was over there at the Black Lodge, in the keeping of the men who had been told off in the start to run Joe down, and, as the leader of the gang put it, "break his back," a young woman with big, sad eyes called to see me. I knew who she was the minute her card was sent up, for Joe had told me all about her and intimated that they expected to be married shortly after the session was over.

In a low but shaking voice she told me how, five years before, Joe had suddenly put an end to a career of dissipation, settled down to hard work, and after a year of steady pulling in the harness had proposed to her. Not a hitch in their happiness had occurred until the morning when I found Joe transformed into a sot. In answer to a few questions she confirmed my suspicion that the boodle hounds had hunted back along Joe's trail until they found his besetting weakness, and had then deliberately started out to "land" him with drink.

Well, after that every time I came back to the city the white face of that young woman

was waiting for me behind the iron fence in the big passenger station. But there was little hope to give her as she lifted her pitifully appealing eyes to me and put the question: "Is the Little Brother any better?" However, the girl's grit never failed her and she hung on like grim death.

The night before the first franchise bill was to be put to final vote I came across Joe sitting sullenly in a lonesome corner of the hotel corridor, his gaze fixed gloomily on a figure in the mosaic flooring. There was just a suggestion of his old self in his eyes as he glanced up at me and silently took the hand which I held out to him.

For a few minutes we sat in silence. Then I drew my chair closer to him and said:

"Joe, have I ever tried to control you in anything down here?"

"No," he answered slowly.

"Have I always left everything to your own manhood?"

"Yes."

"Every time I came back to the city the white face of that young woman was waiting for me in the passenger station."

"Let me go! I've got to tell 'em, but I'll do it."

"Well, I just want to ask you if you're going to stand square for the right thing on roll call tomorrow?"

His hands gripped the arms of his chair, his bleared face grew ashen, and he drew his breath in with a gasp. For some minutes he stared at the floor. Then, in the voice that a man uses in crying out to the man within himself, he said:

"Let me go! Let me go! I've got to tell 'em; but I'll do it. I'll come back. You stay right here."

He jumped to his feet and made a dash to the door, where a cab was waiting for him. Of course, I knew that he was bound for the Black Lodge, and I knew if he ever pulled himself loose from the spiders down there it would be nothing short of a miracle.

But in less than a half hour he was back again, with something like a flicker of his old smile on his face as he said:

"I did it. I told 'em. I'm with you, brother."

And he was as good as his word. When the

vote came he was with us, and we knocked out the boodle bill.

That act, however, was the last convulsion of his expiring manhood. From that time he was hopelessly with the enemy body and soul, and voted with them on the second franchise bill, against which Big Ed led the forces of decency.

There isn't much to tell beyond this. Joe dropped down and down until he couldn't get to his seat in the house. That ended his usefulness to the boodle gang, and they kicked him out as they would a sick dog. Ed, the girl, and I nursed him until he could be taken home.

A week or two finished him, and then we all went down to put him away. At that funeral, as I looked from his broken old mother and his wasted sweetheart to a little group of members who had helped to "break his back and throw him off the water wagon," the devious ways of modern lawmaking looked pesky mean and hateful to me, I can tell you! And I've seen enough of the same sort of wrecks since

to prove that Joe's experience wasn't an exception to the rule. There are hundreds of other cases like his.

And the memory of those that have come across my own path always stirs up my bile until I find myself saying hard things, as I did in that old letter about legislators in general. But, once for all, let me say that there are hundreds of good men making state laws in this country, and that I take off my hat to every one of them who is on the square and doesn't sidestep from the strait and narrow path.

Yours ever,

William Bradley.

FRUITS OF VICTORY.

In which Ned gets some interesting light from William Bradley on the subject of whether the game is worth the candle and, incidentally, on the importance of His Majesty the Speaker and of the newspaper men in the making of live congressmen and dead statesmen. The old Governor makes his point with two stories that show what a real Speaker can do when he takes his coat off.

CHAPTER XVI.

FRUITS OF VICTORY.

Brokenstraw Ranch, —— 19—.

Dear Ned:—

And so, after all, you're going to Congress! With the convention already held and the opposition in such a state of almost infantile helplessness, I don't see how you can possibly fall down. Yes, I'll bear witness to the fact that you've always stuck to it that your ambition would be completely satisfied if you could be sent to Congress from the old district.

Of course I knew that wasn't true, although you thought it was—and think so now. When a good live American citizen, who has once tasted the blood of public office, sets a stake for his ambition and says: "Thus far and no farther," and promises himself perfect content when he reaches that mark, he puts himself in the position of the old fellow down in Arkansas who lived to eat and insisted that if

he once could get outside of a dinner of terrapin, canvasbacks and champagne he'd never ask to eat again in this world.

After you've once fairly warmed your seat in the House you'll realize that you've only begun to live, and that the United States Senate is the only real diamond-pointed stopping place for an able man's ambition. Then, after you've landed in the Senate and grown a little familiar with the scenery there, the White House will be about the only landmark that will loom up on your horizon.

At first you'll be ashamed to acknowledge the thought, even in the secret place of your own inner consciousness. Next you'll argue with yourself that there have been a whole lot of worse Presidents than you would make, and that the woods are full of presidential timber, hollow in the trunk and showing dead limbs at the top. It's not the thing we have in hand but the one that's just ahead of us that we hanker for in politics, as in everything else.

But you are all right, Ned, in your determination to make every hour of your congressional service count, and count hard. You say that you want some advice that gets right down to brass tacks, and will help you to make good with your people before the first crop of soreheads has a chance to go to seed.

Before I went into politics I used to think that Canada thistles were the hardest things in the world to kill down and the swiftest to spread; but I've since discovered that the political sorehead has a cinch on immortality that makes the thistle a thing of the passing moment.

I'm told that a queen bee lays several thousand eggs a day and delegates the tending of them entirely to slaves—but even at that rate Mrs. Bee is at a decided disadvantage in the work of perpetuating the species compared with a political sorehead who keeps reasonably busy sowing dissensions. A social scandal in a country town is a slow spreader alongside a well directed spirit of dissatisfaction with the work of a new congressman.

Keep your sorehead crop mowed tight to the ground and then cover the spot with rock salt every week or two. In other words, give them the Canada thistle treatment in its severest form. And even then they're sure to show their heads in a new place every little while.

You might as well make up your mind, right at the start, Ned, to defer being a statesman until after you're dead. If you're a good enough politician while living, your mourning constituents and the newspapers will take care of your promotion to the statesman class after you're gone. This isn't saying that you are to think of nothing and work for nothing outside of getting things for your fellows and holding your seat.

As near as I was able to size up the situation, there's a sentiment among the members of the national House that every Representative is entitled to have one pet hobby along the line of disinterested statesmanship, so long as he does not allow it to interfere with his reg-

ular duties as a " getter " for his own particular constituency.

There isn't much sentiment in this view of the matter but all the same it works out well in actual practice. If it eases his feelings any, let the new member regard the job-hunting and the hustling for special legislation demanded by influential constituents as the routine drudgery by which he is to hold his job while he works out his pet scheme of " broad statesmanship."

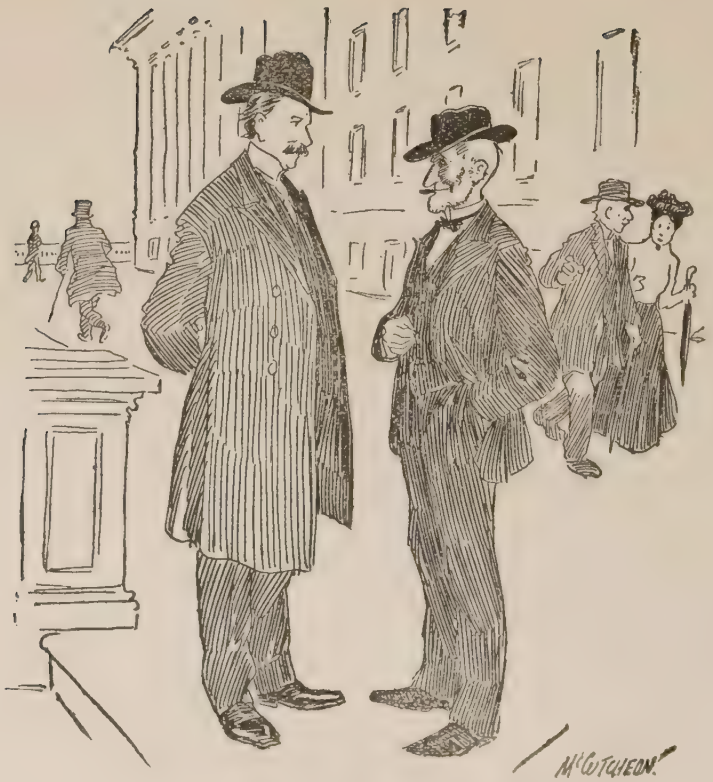
There's some consolation in this view of the matter—but he may be sure that the boys who are keeping up his fences at home and trying to kill out the Canada thistles, look at it that he's entitled to potter around with his pet theory of legislation so long as he doesn't allow it to cut into their interests or those of his district. A fad for collecting old china, colonial furniture or rare coins would be tolerated in the same way by these fellows who man the political machine and keep it going.

If the congressional recruit can hold his seat long enough to make the people of the

country at large connect his name with a particular line of legislation, his followers will swell with pride because he has made good, gets his name in the papers and is classed as an authority. But the congressman who allows himself to think that his reputation as a statesman or legislative specialist is going to excuse him from drumming up places in the departments for the boys is going to be left at home with plenty of time on his hands in which to write reminiscences for the Eastern Magazines.

So, set it down at the start, that your statesmanship is a luxury to be cultivated in moments of leisure. Of course, it's not particularly stimulating to one's patriotism to take this view of the case, but the practical man will square himself to actual conditions—and if these are not now the conditions, things have changed mightily since I used to haunt the departments and lie awake nights trying to pipe lines of influence into the working department of the White House.

Perhaps you may feel that you've fooled



"First square yourself with His Majesty, the Speaker—and keep yourself squared."

around a legislature long enough to get on to all the important wrinkles that are really worth knowing so far as the general business of law-making is concerned; but I've found out that familiarity breeds blindness as well as contempt and that a man is likely to overlook an important point of the game in which he is a regular sitter. So, Ned, I'm going to lay down the law as it looks to me, on two things that you may be supposed to know just as well as I do. Anyhow, these tips will come in handy by way of emphasis to your own observation and will help you to start off your congressional career along practical lines.

First, square yourself with his majesty, the Speaker—and keep squared, no matter if you have to sell your shoes and sit up nights to do it. The man behind the gavel is the keeper of your destiny and the captain of your congressional soul. The nod of his head can do more to make or unmake you politically than a dozen speeches that are cheered from the gallery.

I had my lesson in the power of a speaker

way back in my second legislative term when old Jeremiah Bless ruled the House. He was a great parliamentarian and his book on that subject was regarded as the real authority in our state. As you probably remember, he was the prince of political straddlers, had been ten times elected to the House and never twice on precisely the same ticket.

That year he was elected on what he called the Independent ticket—and as soon as he arrived at the state house he was powerful particular that there should be no confusion as to the precise complexion of his party affiliations. Oh! But he was a cunning old fox and had the audacity of a brindle bull dog!

There had been a close campaign and when we started in to organize the House and line up the members it developed that the two parties were equally divided and that old Jeremiah held the absolute balance of power. Of course, there was a quick scramble on the part of each side to capture the wily old straddler, who had in years past served one term as speaker when he called himself a Republican.

Old Jeremiah Bless nominating himself for Speaker of the House.

But the crafty old fox refused to give definite encouragement to either side, although he kept up a constant flirtation with the leaders of both. This deadlock continued until the House convened and each party placed its candidate for speaker in nomination. After the eloquence of the nominating oratory had subsided old Jeremiah arose. Instantly the House became as still as a church during the passing of the contribution box. With a face masked in almost sober seriousness the man who held the deciding vote began his speech with the declaration:

"I am an Independent. My party has a candidate for the speakership of this honorable House and the necessity of presenting his name and claims devolves upon me."

This beginning was greeted with yells—for he was the only Independent in the assembly! For half an hour old Jeremiah held the House in close attention while he reviewed his own career and analyzed his own character with an impartiality that was magnificent. The sublime effrontery of the man simply dazed the

members and carried them off their feet, and when he closed by offering his own name the cheers from both sides made the house ring.

Well, after the deadlock had held on for a few weeks and the public at large was howling for almost any kind of a speaker in order to get at the business of the session, old Jeremiah fixed up a deal with the Democrats, was elected speaker and took the gavel for a rule that undoubtedly gave Tom Reed pointers on the proper conduct of an American Czar. The Prophet, as we called him, ran things that Winter in a style that was a perpetual lesson in personal dictatorship and made the authority of an old-time master pilot on the Mississippi look like child's play.

Things hadn't been going on long before the fate of a big measure turned on the speaker's ruling. It was a simple parliamentary problem and the right of the matter was as clear as a man's privilege to kiss his own wife behind the pantry door. But the ruling that seemed inevitable was contrary to the interests of the forces with which the

speaker was training. Naturally we all thought we had old Jeremiah at a decided disadvantage.

When the point was raised, however, he ruled against us and never batted an eye as he declared "The chair decides that the point is not well taken. The bill, therefore, passes to a third reading."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when the leader of our side jumped to his feet and demanded the privilege of reading from an authority which he declared "The speaker of the house cannot fail to recognize as conclusive."

"Go ahead," said old Jeremiah.

The excitement was right up to concert pitch as the member finished reading the authority.

"Who wrote that book?" blandly inquired the speaker.

"The paragraph," returned the member, with a smile of triumph on his lips, "which so conclusively maintains our contention, is

from the able treatise written by the speaker of this House, the Honorable Jeremiah—"

A howl of derision interrupted the member's remarks at this point and we waited to see how gracefully old Jeremiah would back water. A thump of the gavel restored order and the speaker smilingly said:

"The chair does not recognize the work from which the gentleman quotes as having the weight of an authority. To his personal knowledge the book abounds in statements and conclusions that have been repeatedly proved erroneous—and in the opinion of the speaker of this House there is not in the whole work a more unsound and mistaken statement than that which the gentleman has read in your hearing. The decision of the chair will not be revised unless some member can bring forward a better authority than has been cited."

Some of our crowd were so mad that they couldn't appreciate the sublime audacity of old Jeremiah's ruling against himself; but it hit

the funny bone of most of us so hard that the sting of unjust defeat died out with the roar of laughter that went up from every part of the house.

A little later, however, a situation arose which we thought covered all emergencies and didn't leave a hole as big as a pin point through which the old fox could crawl out. Just before intermission the speaker made a ruling which, when brought to bear on a measure that was coming up in the afternoon, would kill the progress of a big railroad bill which the speaker's crowd was pushing. The trap had been carefully laid by our boys, who were fighting the bill, and we were as tickled as a girl with her first proposal when old Jeremiah fell into it and put himself on record regarding the point of issue.

He hadn't been in his room five minutes when the general counsel of the interested road was admitted.

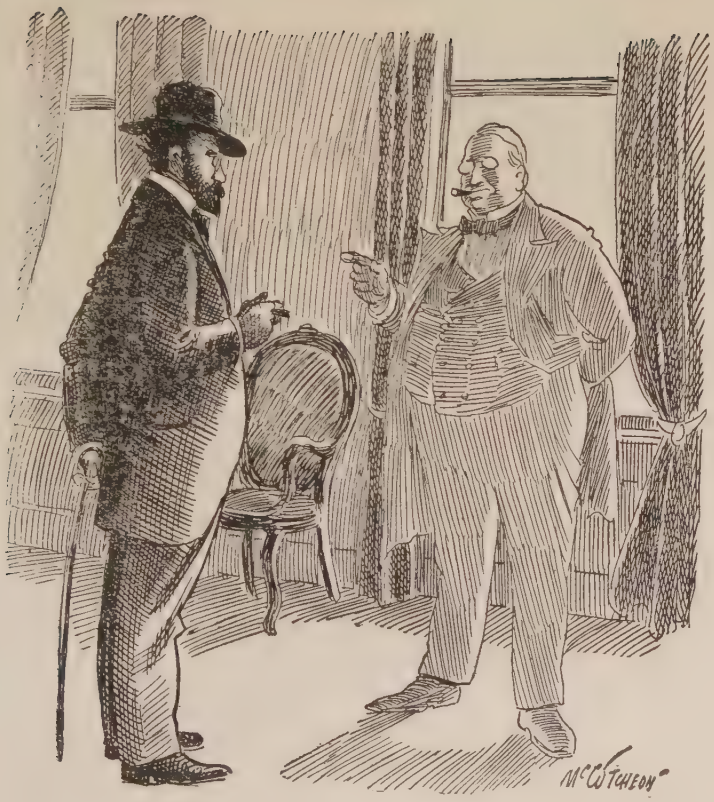
"Mr. Speaker," said the railroad emissary, "I'm afraid that you don't realize that your

last ruling will absolutely kill No. 409 dead—and that the opposition is only waiting to throw your own ruling back in your face within three hours after you've spoken it."

Then after stroking his beard for a moment the caller added: "And I've been informed—reliably, I hope—that you are not hostile to the measure."

"No," easily replied Jeremiah, "the bill's all right, but I am going to show that bunch of smartie school boys that there's more than one way to skin a cat and that a real prophet don't have to work a miracle and make the stream of parliamentary practice run up hill in order to leave them in the lurch. You just rest easy and see what happens when they start in on their little game."

After recess, and just before the railroad bill was reached, the speaker called an ambitious young Republican to the chair and then retired to the lounging room. This young chap had served two or three terms before and had a notion that he knew more about par-



"No," replied Speaker Jeremiah, "I'm going to show that bunch of smartie schoolboys that there's more than one way to skin a cat."

liamentary law than any speaker who had ever occupied the chair—and particularly than old Jeremiah. And besides that, he came from a district in which the railroad most to be benefited by the bill had its largest shops.

In other words here was a chance for him to give the speaker's ruling a black eye and at the same time give the interests that controlled the politics of his bailiwick just what they wanted. Of course, there was a howl of rage, but we had to take our medicine. He ruled against us, and took five minutes in which to explain why he differed from the ruling given in the forenoon by the regular speaker.

After this experience I didn't need to be told that the main thing in making a record as a lawmaker is to have a line on the speaker. And I also concluded that it's worth while to keep in touch with the men who are likely to be called to the chair when the speaker is absent or taking a little breathing spell.

Then don't forget that the press gallery of the House is a most important part of the sit-

uation. Many a Washington correspondent wearing a small hat has done more to make certain congressmen into statesmen than all the oratory, flowers and game dinners they managed to pull off in the course of their distinguished careers. Be useful to the newspaper boys, Ned, and you can afford occasionally to step on the toes of some mighty important individuals who prance around in the statesmen stables and consider themselves mighty showy stock.

The only thing that a congressman can afford to steal is news, and he shouldn't do that if there is any harm to come of it. But when he can tip off a good thing to his friends in the press gallery he's adding a leaf to his laurels and a line of praise to his public record as a sure-enough statesman.

You make mention in your letter of the "fruits of victory." I don't wholly share the pessimistic view of the book of Ecclesiastes on this score; they have yielded me something more than "vanity of vanities," but all the same you'll never gather a larger harvest of

that sort of fruit than right now, when you're reading congratulations and getting your grip ready for the trip to Washington.

After you get into the harness in the House you'll find just as much trimming and back-scratching as in the Legislature, only it's on a bigger scale. Perhaps you think you're going to be thrown with men of big caliber who are above petty things.

I thought so too—until I saw a real statesman, one of the drive-wheels of the House, get as mad as a hornet over the fact that his committee didn't get the room he wanted. You know how a boy acts when he sees his girl on another fellow's sled? Just make up your mind that this kind of juvenile history is repeated every day by the distinguished statesmen with whom you are enjoying the privilege of intimate association.

I don't want to throw cold water on the bare back of your new-born joy, Ned, but in all the fruits of victory you'll never taste anything sweeter than the grip of happiness that clutched your throat that night when you

came down from the convention and your wife hugged you as you tried to tell her how it all happened.

Just give her my best regards.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

Wherein William Bradley demonstrates to Ned that, while love at first sight is a mighty taking proposition in the beginning of story book or in matrimonial affairs of other folks, it has led many a trusting politician to pack his own caucus with secret enemies without leaving standing room for his real friends.

CHAPTER XVII.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

Before you have been in Washington a fortnight you write me that you have formed friendships which you feel will last for the rest of your natural life.

That's just like you, Ned—as impulsive as a setter pup and ready to play tag with the very boot that's waiting for the first good chance to kick you off the back steps. It's too bad to apply the freezing treatment to a faith as fine and ready as yours, but if you continue to hand out the coin of your confidence and the currency of your friendship without collateral or security in kind at the rate you have started in on, one short term at Washington will be enough to put your political future into the hands of a receiver.

Love-at-first-sight is a mighty taking proposition in the start of a story or in the matri-

monial affairs of other folks, but it has led many a politician to pack his own caucus with a choice assortment of secret enemies, without leaving standing room for his real friends who would stay with him through flood and fire. Impetuosity is all right in a campaign speech in which you are pounding the open enemy, but it is a whole lot safer to put part of it in escrow when it comes to hooking up with a lot of seasoned old stagers who have played politics at the national capital ever since you became sufficiently civilized to wear a night-shirt.

On general principles, the picking of friends is a doubtful and ticklish business, but in politics the showdown comes so quick and often that the trusting tenderfoot is likely to find himself all in before he has time to recover anything on his contributions to the jackpots of experience.

Any politician who has enough of the gift of prophecy six times in ten to pick a friend and spot an enemy on sight can have all the official persimmons he cares to gather in—and

all creation can't stop him. But there aren't enough of this sort of men with the real simon-pure article of political second sight under their hats to keep the history of politics from looking like the report of a convention of traitors. The higher up you get, the greater is the pressure of practical necessity, and the board of strategy is constantly obliged to make larger drafts on the supposition that all's fair in love and war.

Speaking of leaning too hard on the shoulders of your love-at-first-sight friends reminds me of the experience of a young Democrat who saw the first Cleveland boom above the horizon when it was no bigger than a man's hand. Mr. Cleveland and his father had been friends from boyhood, and when the presidential bee began to buzz, Grover sent for the young man and put him in charge of everything in his state.

This was a nervy thing to do, for the reason that the state was in the doubtful list, but looked particularly promising that year for the Democrats. Then, too, the young man

had been in the state but a short time and was not recognized by the regular machine which had a grip on several of the state offices.

When it got out that this young man held credentials straight from Cleveland as Captain of the Hosts in that state and was expected to send an instructed delegation to the national convention, there was war in camp and the machine leaders cut out their work to kill instructions and show " the little alien upstart " that he couldn't come into the state and run things over their heads.

They knew that the people of the party were with the young man and sentiment was strong throughout the state for Mr. Cleveland, but they also knew that in case of ultimate triumph all along the line the machine would have to stand back and watch the young friend of the man from Buffalo hand out the official plums and give orders for future business. This made them smart with resentment and they were determined to " show the young man," no matter if it cost the nomination of

the only man who could carry the party to a national victory.

The first move they made was to put through the state central committee a new program for the coming convention that did violence to the precedents of years and reversed the order of business in such a manner that the chairman could hopelessly jockey the question of instructions by a confusion of amended motions.

But the young man saw just where and how the fight was shaping as well as they did. By long distance telephone he placed the situation before Mr. Cleveland, mapped out a line of action and had it approved in detail by the big chief. Then he called a conference of those interested in tying up the delegation snug and tight with instructions for Grover Cleveland and passed out the word that the one job on hand was to agree upon every detail of the fight in the convention so that there would be no pounding the air, no false motions—every blow aimed and timed to do the heaviest execution.

Now the young captain had touched up with the Mayor of his city, who was as smooth as axle grease and knew every party hanger-on by his front name. And that is only another way of saying that the city executive had a large list of hungry hunters for office for whom he had been unable to find places on the pay-roll.

Somehow Mr. Mayor managed to snuggle up to the vest of my young friend and warm a nice generous spot for himself there. As things moved along he brought a whole lot of his braves into the camp of my friend and gave them recommendations that would have done a candidate for Sunday-school superintendent proud.

Like yourself, the young leader thought he had found a friend that would stay with him until the roof fell in, and he hugged himself every time the Mayor's name came to his mind. Every now and then the Mayor would come to him and say:

" John, there's a young friend of mine who knows the ropes from deck to masthead and

if you've no objection I should like to have him in the conference when we frame up the program. His advice is worth having, and I'd feel safer if he were right on hand where we could get the benefit of his knowledge."

"Oh, that's all right, of course," was the invariable reply, "your friends are my friends."

When the night of the pow-wow came and the conference assembled in secret session, my young friend looked upon the result of his labor and knew that it was good. As he scanned the faces in the packed room he caught the benignant and fatherly smile of the Mayor—and once more gave inward thanks for the aid of so stalwart a friend. Then his eye wandered over the rest of the assembled faithful; in every direction he looked his glance was met by the face of some bright young hustler who had been brought into the field by the invitation of the Mayor.

Yes, it was a great gift to be able to pick the right sort of friends and do it without the slow process of time. What was time, anyhow, when it came to forming the real attach-

ments that hold men of the world together? he asked himself—and answered his own question with the scriptural line: "One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." All this passed through his mind in a flash as the stragglers were settling down into their seats. There was a little well-trimmed oratory just to put the meeting into the proper spirit—and then the young leader arose and outlined the plan of action to be followed.

After a motion had been put to adopt the scheme as a fighting program in the convention, the Mayor arose and asked the privilege of "introducing" his views on one or two points which, he feared, had been "overlooked by the younger adherents of the cause." He didn't begin by clearing his throat—not he! He was too smooth for that. His voice was soft-pedaled down to the pitch of a moonlight prelude and every word dripped from his lips was coated with emulsion of honey.

Before he sat down he contrived to suggest that the conference was not a representative one; that the main spokes in the young

The Mayor arose and asked the privilege of introducing his views on one or two points.

man's machine were not delegates to the convention; that the person suggested for floor leader was not in touch with the rank and file of the party; that the young leader himself was not familiar with the ropes or the men who should manipulate them and that an adjournment should be taken until a "thoroughly representative body, mainly composed of actual delegates," could be brought together to determine upon the proper course of action.

Then, in purely an inadvertent way, he dropped the suggestion that a certain young man—an oily little whipper-snapper who had been sneaked into the convention under the Mayor's own coat-tails—had that "intimate acquaintance with local men and conditions which pre-eminently fitted him for the important position of floor leader in the convention," and that a certain trio of choice scamps from the city hall gang would make a strong committee that could skunk the enemy and get an instructed delegation for the Sage of Buffalo before the convention waked up to the knowledge that it was being worked.

But, in particular, the Mayor put the emphasis of his finish on the point that the plan of the young leader to overthrow the order of business outlined by the state central committee would not only arouse antagonism on the part of the regular organization, but was wholly unnecessary—as that result could be so easily and quietly accomplished by the resourceful trio he had suggested as a steering committee.

As the Mayor took his seat it was plain to see from the serene smile that oozed from the pores of his countenance that he expected his proposition would be accepted by the conference as eagerly as a mold of pigs-feet jelly would be assimilated by a Dutch picnic party.

Instantly my friend was on his feet—his eyes lit up like a blacksmith's anvil in a Saturday's rush of business.

"I may not have lived in this state as long as some people who are not yet buried," declared the young leader, "and I see evidences that I am a little short on a full knowledge of 'local men and conditions'; but I can tell the

gentleman who has just spoken that I put away my teething ring and baby ' pacifier ' several years ago and that my high chair went into the retirement of the family attic about the time he was first elected to office. There isn't going to be any postponement of this conference; I'm going to appoint the steering committee myself; the plan of action that I've outlined is going to be carried out in the convention to the letter—and he's going to get out of this meeting and get out quick. We'll stop right here while he takes himself away and if there are any others here of his stripe—and there are—they'll do well to follow him through the door. The headquarters of the old organization are over Siler's saloon—but I guess he knows the way."

Nothing short of this sudden show of nerve ever saved the young leader's bacon, for the oily man from the city hall had packed the conference with his own clansmen. Then, besides, there were several weak-kneed sisters in my young friend's forces, and without this stock

of good fighting grit they would have wavered and faltered.

But that dash put sap into the whole outfit and they rushed the program through in a hurry and closed the conference. They had one spellbinder in the bunch who was a power when once he got on a full head of steam, but it took a heap of fire to get him started. This conference warmed him through and when, as floor leader, he let go his oratory the convention was swept off its feet and the instructions went through with whoop.

The Mayor tried to crawl back into the band wagon, but my young friend wouldn't so much as let him carry a torch in the precinct marching club. Later, after the election had placed Mr. Cleveland in the White House, the young leader was apportioned to deal out the plums in the state and the way he handled the applications for office on the part of the fellows who had been mixed up with his old thirty-day friend, the Mayor, was a study in the art of neglect.

"Once I believed in the doctrine of love at first sight," he remarked to me, "but now I don't trifle with any friendships that have not been seasoned in the open air of experience."

From all this some people might be inclined to draw the conclusion that the only safe thing to do is to hold all comers as enemies until they prove themselves friends, but you've too much horse sense to go to this extreme, I think. The man who hates at first sight is almost as likely to make a mess of it as the fellow whose friendship is set on a hair trigger.

In the last national campaign I was sent out to Iowa to do a little talking and to fill some emergency dates under the direction of the state central committee. One day the chairman of the oratory department said to me:

"One of our fellows who was billed to speak at Sugar Grove tomorrow night has jumped the track and I'd like to have you run down there and give them a rousing talk. Somehow that neck of the woods has been neglected by

our folks, who've sort of let it go to the enemy by default. There isn't another place in the state where the right kind of a talk would do the good that it would there. Will you go? "

" Certainly," I answered. " It doesn't matter to me where you send me."

Now the young chap who hammered the typewriter had evidently taken a shine to me and when the captain of the spellbinder department stepped out of the room the lad said to me:

" It wouldn't be fair, sir, for me to keep still and let you go out to Sugar Grove without explaining that they'll mob you just as sure as you set foot in their measly little backwoods town. That's why the other man ducked at the last minute. There's a gang out there waiting to break the head of any man of our kind that dares to take the stump inside the county limits. We haven't been able to get a speaker to try it since the year of the big fight."

" The big fight? " I inquired.

" Yes," he answered, " that was the start

of the whole thing. You see, the enemy is mighty strong there in Shellbark county, while we're on top in the next county of Dodd. About six years ago, in the state campaign, some of the Shellbark boys, on the other side, went into Dodd county to hold a big rally.

"Party feeling was high and a lot of hot-headed young chaps of our persuasion came down on the fold, used up all the over-ripe eggs and potatoes in the neighborhood and broke up the meeting. Then the Shellbark fellows swore that if we ever sent a speaker into their territory they'd mob him on sight. They're a mighty rough set there and we've never found a speaker yet who had the nerve to go up against them. It's a bad place and I'd suggest that you'd better be too sick, at the last minute, to go. Better be sick beforehand than dead afterwards, you know."

Although the lad knew what he was talking about and was tremendously in earnest, I had never flunked on an assignment and finally concluded that it was altogether too late in life to begin dodging.

Consequently, I put a pair of big-bore derringers in my overcoat pocket and started for Sugar Grove. There wasn't any brass band at the station to meet me, so far as I noticed, and the tavern-keeper's dog skinned his teeth at me in a way that wasn't exactly friendly. However, the bills announcing my speech were plastered over the horse sheds and the front of the blacksmith shop all right, and the fellow who had charge of the hall said that everything would be ready for the doings at night.

I asked him if he thought we should have a good crowd, and he replied that he reckoned that we'd have a crowd all right, but he didn't say anything about the quality of it.

There were plenty of fellows hanging about the tavern, whittling and pitching quoits, but not one of them ventured to make himself sociable with me. By supper time I had come to the conclusion that I knew something of the feelings of a fellow suddenly landed on a desert island and surrounded by dusky natives who were waiting for a good chance to stick

There were plenty of fellows hanging around the tavern whittling.

him full of spears and call in their friends to the barbecue. At last I determined to get out and see if I couldn't shake off the gloom of the place by a good brisk walk of a mile or two. So I struck into a lively lope down the main traveled road and by the time I reached the wayside watering trough I was feeling a little more cheerful.

While taking a drink from the spout that fed the trough, about a dozen big husky young fellows on horseback drew up, jumped from their saddles and allowed their horses to drink. They paid no more attention to me than if I had been a grasshopper, but put in their time drinking red liquor out of the flasks they carried in their pockets. Then they mounted and rode on into town.

Right then and there I made up my mind that I was up against a tougher proposition than I had figured on, and that this gang of young ruffians and I would have to try each other out before the meeting was over.

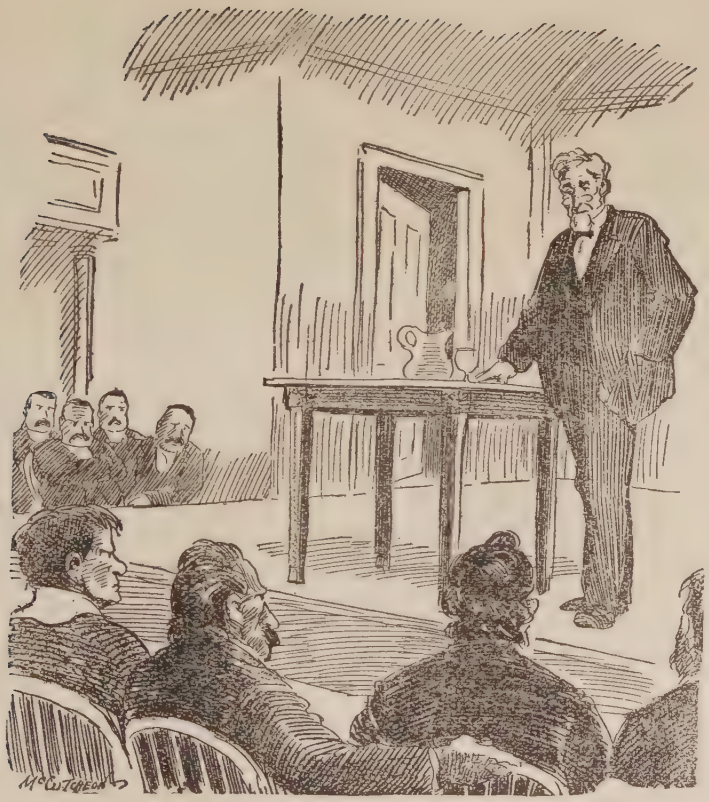
Before I went from the tavern to the town

hall I changed my pistols to the pockets of my undercoat and made up my mind that whatever happened I should stand pat and give them tit for tat.

The minute I came out on the platform I saw that the gang was planted in the front seats and that the strapping young chap who was evidently the leader had the chair on the aisle nearest me. I figured that about two jumps would land him on the platform, provided he felt disposed to get there.

There was but one thing to do and that I did. Looking the young leader squarely in the eyes, I fired my remarks straight at him—and I didn't mince matters either. Now and then my hand strayed into my side pocket, I confess, and touched up with the derringer, just for the sake of company.

Every minute I expected things to break loose—but, to my amazement, there wasn't a ripple of excitement and the whole meeting was as quiet as a funeral. Somehow, as I wound up my speech and stepped off the platform, I felt a little bit of something like dis-



The minute I came out on the platform I saw that the gang was planted in the front seats.

appointment at the fact that the affair had turned out so tamely.

But just at that moment the young fellow I had been talking at made towards me—and both my hands slipped into my side pockets again. He grinned quietly, however, and said to me in an undertone:

"You're all right, Governor. Perhaps you didn't know it, but the sheriff was a little afraid there might be trouble up here tonight and so he sent a bunch of us boys to take care of you if any rumpus broke out. This hain't the most peaceable place on the prairies, and there has been a good deal of bad blood here in the past. But I guess you've settled it that your party can hold a political meeting in this county if it wants to, without a killing. Now I'll walk over to the train with you and see that you get aboard all safe and sound. 'Tain't necessary, I know, but I promised the sheriff I would."

Up to that time I had always had the notion that I could spot an out-and-out enemy on sight, whether I could tell a friend at first sight or not. After that experience I came to the

conclusion that snap judgments on human nature are on a par with snap caucuses, and that it takes a little time to try out either a friend or an enemy.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

AT DROP OF THE HAT.

In which William Bradley puts it down as a safe rule that, in politics, the man who is worth tying up with will do business at drop of the hat or not at all and that when a man who knows when to lay down three aces asks for time to sleep over a proposition and incidentally to consult a few disinterested friends before showing his hand, there is trouble ahead.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT DROP OF THE HAT.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

Your letter saying that the fellows who run things in the southern end of the state have asked for more time in which to consider your proposition for a combination of forces that would put you in line for the Governorship, calls for a little comment. You may put it down as a safe rule that, in politics, the man who knows the game and is worth tying up with will do business at drop of the hat.

When a good, wide-awake politician tells you that he wants to sleep over a proposition, just put it down that he is simply playing you for time and intends to throw you down at the finish. No real political leader will insist upon submitting a prospective move to his camp followers, his wife and his attorneys, and if he intimates that something of this kind is necessary make up your mind that the fellows

he proposes to consult belong to the camp of the enemy.

You hear a whole lot of talk to the effect that the lightning deciders are holding down heavyweight jobs in the pay of big business houses and corporations, but I have never noticed any of them who could quite touch the real politician on the score of an instantaneous exposure of decision. His mental shutters are ready to work at the squeeze of the bulb and when they don't work that way you may take your choice between two conclusions: he has got a better trick to play than the one you offer or else he's suffering from a temporary attack of political spring-halt, politely called conservatism.

Now and then the readiest and snappiest players of the political game have spasms of acute caution when they crave the soothing syrup of "consultation." But you can't take this kind of medicine without also taking time to sleep off its effects, and time is the essence of all political contracts, as well as mortgages, trust deeds and other effective compacts.

A RETIRED POLITICIAN

A young political leader can't put in his spare minutes to better advantage than in watching himself to see that his attacks of the colic of conservatism don't carry him off his feet at the critical turns in his career. But you may depend upon it that when a crisis is up to him and he needs to meet it with the ready blow of instant decision, straight from the shoulder, he will feel quivers of hesitation centering towards the pit of his stomach, and his internal economy will cry out for the seductive prescription of delay, advice and sympathetic council—the poppy-distilled potion that has put scores of good politicians to sleep at the moment when they might have grasped the great prize of life's ambition.

Of course, you remember the big fight that landed Dave Macey in the United States Senate, but you were not so close to the center of things that you could see all the hands that were played off before Dave finally managed to tire out the machine and make the necessary number of balky country members back up to his wagon and submit to the Macey farm

harness. As I was one of the organization steering committee in that fight, I naturally know a deal of its inside history and I promise you it is rich in chapters that would bear out the general title "He might have been."

However, there was one might-have-been whose history throws light on the subject of misplaced political hesitation in a way that is calculated to illuminate the path of any young leader who attempts to flirt with the proud and prudish goddess of delay.

Martin Moore was the machine candidate —one of the old wheelhorses of the organization who had been marked for promotion. I suppose United States Senators have been made out of timber a deal smaller than Mart, who was a shrewd, resourceful and shifty old boy with that rugged sort of homeliness which is a good deal better than handsome looks in catching the fancy of the plain people. While Mart could make a pretty fair talk, he was no spellbinder, and his brand of campaign eloquence hadn't enough bubbles in it to enthuse a public that had been educated on campmeet-

ing and revival sermons with the real fireworks in them.

But Mart had one strong point in addition to his masterful homeliness. As a barefooted lad he had driven canal boats. We started him out as the "tow-path candidate" and expected that this cry would stampede the common people and land him in the Senate without any particular difficulty. Sometimes the right sort of a nickname will do more to catch the votes of the masses than a genius for statesmanship and a record without a hole in it, and often a fortunate phrase as a campaign cry will get a candidate a bigger crowd of followers than a spotless life and a righteous cause.

However, the reform newspapers began to hammer Martin, and they continued to pound his tow-path clean through his career in the legislature in a way that rather rapped the romance out of our campaign cry and diverted attention from the barefooted boy on the canal boat to the man who had been mixed up with a string of legislative measures that had become decidedly unpopular.

To make matters worse, the best story teller, mixer and general campaigner in the state decided to cut into the game and try to land the big prize. We accused him of not having enough dignity to keep from telling a funny story at a funeral, but somehow he continued to make headway and gather in a stray member now and then. The other man in the fight, so far as our party was concerned, was a highly respectable and dignified citizen who had three mighty handy qualifications—a barrel, no political record and one of those conservative temperaments that stand at zero when making love or grabbing off the ambition of a lifetime.

For weeks and months every faction stood its ground and fought tooth and nail for each inch of advantage. If ever a political machine was worked to the limit ours was in that fight. We took slack, sanded the track, threw the throttle wide open, and still the deadlock refused to budge. In short, we were stuck.

When it was clear that we had reached the absolute limit of our strength, and couldn't

pull another ounce with Martin as a candidate he did the square thing by telling us to take up any other man who could draw enough votes from the other candidates to save the victory to the organization. We hated to drop him, for he was a stayer of the old-fashioned sort, but there was nothing else to do but shift to some fellow who could bring a little strength of his own and pull enough votes from the others to elect.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached the showdown stage of the game and the steering committee met in secret session to pick out a new candidate who could show us the way out of the woods. After the other fellows had suggested a half dozen men who were promptly put out of the running by arguments from the assembled bosses I saw a light and said:

"Boys, what's the matter with 'Sugarlips' Sunridge? He's strong with the administration; he's the father of the Young Men's Republican League; he's one of the bright and shining lights of the bar; the reform news-

papers have been sounding his praises ever since he first showed his head in politics; there isn't a man in the state who can fly the oratorical kite with a longer string; his lips drop sweetness on every fellow who passes the time of day with him; he can tell almost as good a story as the Insurgent candidate; his dignity would make a senatorial toga get right off its peg with delight at the chance to fit his shoulders, and——"

"Look here!" interrupted the real boss. "Just save the rest for the nominating speech. He'll do if he'll jump into the fight and show that he can bring in some votes. But he's got to show us first—remember that! Send for him, and have him here before daylight. If he don't get on the ground and throw out a skirmish line before business opens up at the state house he'll be everlastingly too late, for there's going to be a break-up mighty sudden."

I fired a telegram to Sugarlips telling him to catch the evening train for the capital. Then I sat down and held a little session with myself. Better than any one else I knew that

he had the elements of strength which would pull the six votes required to elect away from the other fellows; in fact, I could count up the very men he could be depended upon to draw into our line.

On the other hand, I knew that two or three other emergency candidates had also been sent for by the big boss, and that the agreement among the members of the slate-making department to keep mum and let the dark horses strike out and develop their own strength must be observed to the letter. Not one of them was to be told the strength or the weakness of the organization, and each was simply to be given the chance to strike out and make a showing on his own responsibility.

Sunridge was my personal friend. We had read law in the same office as young men and tried scores of cases together later on. If he were elected I could count on almost any appointment I might ask for, and could swing an influence that would put me way ahead in the race I was running. And, besides all that, I felt it in my boots that he was the only dark

horse who could really come in winner on the home stretch.

You can just bet that after I had sat for hours with my heels on the table figuring this situation up one side and down the other I began to wish that I could get behind the train that was bringing Sunridge and do a little lively pushing, for I knew that every minute before the morning roll call was precious in the sight of the big boss and meant heaps of things to me.

At 2 o'clock in the morning Sunridge walked into the hotel and I grabbed his grip, made a dash for the elevator and led him away to a high place to show him the kingdoms of the earth.

As he lighted a cigar I unrolled the situation to him as well as I could under the limitations placed upon me.

" It's as plain to me," I said, " as a red barn on a sidehill that this is your hour and you're the man for the hour. I can promise you that the minute you show us enough votes from the other camps to elect you with those of the

machine our whole strength will go to you in a jiffy. We'll make good on the dot, and all you've got to do is to show us the margin. When we used to thumb the same copy of Blackstone in old Judge Bunker's office we didn't dream that you'd have a seat in the United States Senate within your reach, and that I'd be the fellow to push it in front of you, did we?"

"N—o," he answered, lighting a fresh cigar with the tip of his stub. "But, Bill, you see this is very sudden." Somehow that remark made my enthusiasm splutter out like the sizzling cigar stub he dropped into the cuspidor.

"So sudden!" I replied. "That's what my wife said when I proposed after a courtship stringing over the space of three years. And maybe you want another year to consider it in as she did!"

"Not quite as long as that, Bill," he answered, good naturedly. "But the fact is I must sleep over it. It's a very important step —very important—and you couldn't quite ex-

pect me to take it without a little consultation with my most confidential advisers."

The confounded deliberation with which he drawled this out in his soothing syrup tones riled me and I was mad in a second—didn't care much, for a minute, whether he came into the fight or not. But later I cooled down a little and went the length of my rope in painting his opportunity in the rosiest possible colors.

" Now, old man," I said, slapping him on the back, " the thing for you do do is to rustle a few of the boys out of bed, get them in line and then go down to the desk and arrange for opening your headquarters at day-break along with the rest of the dark horses. Do it and you'll come in under the wire and leave them among the ' also-rans.' "

" N—o," he drawled, " I'll see you at breakfast and give you my decision."

While he was snoring in the next room I could hear the hoofs of the other dark horse candidates going up and down the hall and the voice of Happy Dave, the Insurgent, in the

"Happy Dave" was busy telling stories to a bunch of country members.

Sugarlips nibbled his toast and said "I've about decided to make the race."

room over my head was busy telling stories to a bunch of country members who pounded the floor with their boots as he made each point in his yarns. I'd heard those stories so often I could tell which one was being told by the way the applause came in.

Well, at breakfast Sunridge nibbled at his toast and said:

"I've about decided to make the race, Bill, but there are two men I must see before I can really jump into the fight. I never take any big step without consulting them, and this is a case which demands the soundest counsel. I'll be over to the state house a little later and let you know."

I'll never forget the expression on his face as he slipped down the aisle of the House two hours later and stood beside my desk. The roll call was in progress and three of the fellows who had previously been with old Stiff-neck, the Conservative, fell into the Insurgent band-wagon. I remember hearing their haw-haws the last thing before I dropped asleep about 5 o'clock that morning.

Of course, the Insurgents yelled like a lot of Thanksgiving football rooters. Then came the break. A dozen members were on their feet shouting for a chance to change their votes and the fight was all in.

Sugarlips stood there, his mouth partially open, and his eyes bulging. " I had come—ah —come to say I'd do it," he said in a dazed way.

" Well," I answered, " after you've slept over it and consulted your friends, the members of your family and a few of your social acquaintances, I'd be pleased to introduce you to the man who'll sit, for the next six years, in the seat in the United States Senate that you could have had, at drop of the hat, if you'd just said ' Yep ' after I'd given you the tip at 3:30 this morning."

His infernal hesitation put the whole organization out of business for four years, and all the spokes and wheels of the machine we'd been ten years in building haven't been gathered up yet; it set me back eight years on the Governorship and smashed the political

chances of a dozen of his best friends. But it taught him a lesson, for a big corporation offered him a position as general counsel, a month later, and he snapped up the tender before the president could reach for his hat.

Whatever you trifle with, Ned, don't attempt to play with the whirligig of Time in the game of politics. It will throw you quicker'n a green broncho. Remember the Scriptures and make peace with the adversary quickly, while you're in the way with him.

The man who knows when to lay down three aces will never ask the boys to hold the game open while he sleeps on the proposition —and incidentally consults a few disinterested friends.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

THE GRAFT AND THE GAFF.

Wherein William Bradley offers a new commandment that "He who takes the graft shall also take the gaff," and tells the story of Senator Soapy, who went after the Assistant Postmaster General and got what was coming to him.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GAFF AND THE GRAFT.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

So your short Washington experience has already taught you that men who have acquired the habit of being much closeted are not always open to the charge of making many prayers—that is, of the devotional sort—and that it's worth a new member's reputation for common honesty and common decency to be seen in private conversation with some of the men who hold down seats in the House and Senate. That's a good beginning, for in Congress a man is known by the company he doesn't keep.

While all of the Ten Commandments are strictly pertinent to the modern politician, I'd like to offer a rider to that omnibus bill on good morals in these words: "He who takes the graft shall also take the gaff."

It's a long time since I took a nip of beauty

sleep in a Senate cloak room; but there are some observations that came to my eye there that stick to me like burrs in the coat of an Irish setter, and all of them seem to be focused in this new commandment. There was one incident in particular that drove this home to me hard.

The same winter that gave me a seat in the Senate also elevated to that dignity—and it is a dignity, too—a dapper and oily gentleman who came up from one of the staid old states of the East. He made his appearance in a sack coat and a pair of trousers that would have made a star outfit for a wheel of fortune fakir at a county fair.

The checks of that suit simply shouted, and he wore the first fire-red necktie, so I was told, that had ever invaded the Senate chamber on the neck of a member. The general modesty of the human landscape which he offered for the inspection of his distinguished colleagues was emphasized by the glare of a diamond stud about the size of a marrow-fat pea. To top it all, his head was crowned with a silk

Senator Soapy made his appearance in a sack coat and trousers that would have made a star outfit for a fakir.

hat fresh from the haberdasher's. All in all, his get-up was a work of art if its object was that of giving his fellow Senators a jolt that almost threw them out of their seats.

They took one look at him, and then the frost line began to circle around every one of them. He could empty the cloak room on sight, from that time forward, about as quick as if he had the mange, so far as the dignified old wheelhorses and the society contingent were concerned. They gave him a rating, right at the start, that would have put him out of business if it hadn't been for the fact that party lines were drawn desperately close, that Winter, on several measures of immense importance. The atmosphere that he came into that day would have frozen the fins of an Alaskan seal.

You know that I have a weakness for the under dog, Ned, and so I made up my mind to give him a friendly chance, so far as I was concerned. Then, too, every new member is likely to feel a bit lonesome and awkward when he first tries to live in the high altitude of the

United States Senate. He knows that it's up to him to look like a statesman at work and he feels about as useless, isolated and misplaced as a Chinese image on the marble center-table of a farm-house parlor.

Naturally this community of interest drew the new members together like a bunch of yearlings in a first snowstorm. Huddling together helped to take off the chill and make us feel that we weren't quite so much alone in the cold world. And when we bunched up that way we didn't ask for references or pedigrees. We were willing to ask no questions and to find each other out, gradually.

But there was one member of the Awkward Squad who rose superior to his surroundings in the course of a fortnight—and he was Senator Soapy, as the pages and clerks soon nicknamed the new member with checkered clothes and the silk hat. And the boy who gave him that name had bought experience handing up a dollar to a traveling soap-fakir whose wagon had invaded his home town. Never was a fitter name given to a human

being for, the minute that fellow was able to get the recognition of the Chair, he began to play the tricks of the soap wagon; and he kept on selling soap until—well; I'm getting a little ahead of my story!

Because I didn't give him the full force of a Manitoba wave and freeze him stiff the minute he came near me, Senator Soapy warmed up to me like a brother in distress and told me the story of his life, in installments. He came, he said, of poor but honest parents and had made his own way since he was big enough to wear long trousers and play with a razor. There wasn't anything in the standard obituaries of self-made statesmen that had been left out of his early struggles excepting nights of study by the glare of a pine knot fire, so he confided to me.

Before he left the district school the fires of oratorical passion had begun to burn in his breast and he was a seasoned spellbinder at sixteen. He didn't say anything about doing stunts at county fairs or serving a long and faithful apprenticeship under the instruction

of an expert soap-fakir, but he did confess that his first lucrative employment was in the capacity of a traveling teacher of elocution.

But, according to his account, he soon tired of mouthing the utterances of other great minds and decided to enter a profession in which he could find full swing for his oratorical genius and pour out his soul in the tones with which he had clothed the thoughts of others, to the delight of thousands.

So he settled down to the study of law in a country town and before he had been admitted to the bar he was on the stump making the welkin ring with the noise of his eloquence. From that time forward, he assured me, he had fought his way steadily onward and upward until his triumphal election to the United States Senate.

While he didn't say that he was exactly expecting that the Presidential nomination would be thrust on him in about eight years, he indirectly intimated that a good many repairs would have to be made in the White House in order to make it thoroughly habit-

able for a man of his sensitive and somewhat delicate physique.

There was, however, one fly in his ointment that always bobbed up on the surface whenever he discussed the favorite theme of his own hand-made career. This was an implacable enemy. Although he seasoned his talk with frequent hints of this mysterious and relentless pursuer who had "dogged his footsteps" from the time he made his first run for the Legislature, I noticed that Senator Soapy was careful not to call names or give me any clew to the identity of his dark Nemesis. But he made it clear that this fellow had the vengeful malice of an Apache Indian.

"But I'll have his scalp before long," the Senator would chuckle in his sudsy way. "That's one of the things I'm here for. He'll get the gaff and get it hard if I don't turn another trick while I'm here. You just wait and see. Every man who has ever reached any degree of achievement, I guess, has had some envious dog snapping at his heels. Of course, I'm beyond his power to harm and I

could afford to ignore him—but I'm human, sir, and I propose to put him where he can no longer nag me. I intend to have my mind clear for the larger tasks and responsibilities of my position."

Just about this time I happened to meet up with one of the Assistant Postmaster-Generals—a tall, lanky, raw-boned, grass-fed man who made me feel that he was sound to the core the minute I grasped his hand. He was as handsome as a hemlock slab, and you could feel the slivers of his aggressive honesty at first touch. Somehow I cottoned to him right from the start and whenever I got to feeling a little lonesome for the company of a man who looked at things on my level, had the smell of the good old country sod about him and hadn't been coated with Washington varnish, I would send for Hank Murray and we'd have a heart-to-heart talk at Harvey's.

We didn't swap family secrets for a long time. He knew how to hold his tongue and I liked him better for not giving up all he knew. One night, however, we touched up a little

closer than ever and finally, in his shy, awkward way he said:

"I've had something on my mind a long time, Senator, and I guess I'm close enough to you now, to speak out in meeting."

"Sure," I replied, "spit it right out."

"Well, I'll do it," he replied, putting down his knife and fork and looking me square in the eye. "You've been in Washington long enough to know that one of the chief branches of business here is knocking; scandal is a fine art in these parts and the 'poison of asps,' as the Scriptures say, is one of the principal circulating mediums. I've made it a rule to keep my mouth shut along those lines, but tonight I'm going to break over and make an exception.

"I've noticed that you train a good deal with Senator Soapy—and, what's worse, I've heard some of the best men here comment on that fact. He's a grafter from way back—I know what I'm talking about—and you're getting tarred with his stick, in the minds of some mighty good men who wouldn't be seen

in private talk with him, just by the mere fact of your association with him. I know you're not his kind and I don't want to see you handicap yourself with a reputation for intimacy with him."

"What do you know about him?" I asked.

"I know all about him," replied Hank, rapping the table with his fist. "I've fought him in his own district from the time he made his first stump speech—fought him because he was as crooked and slippery as a water snake. He's spent the best part of his life since he began to read law trying to kill me out because I couldn't be scared or bought into silence on the subject of his grafting.

"I came into his district and bought a country newspaper about the time he showed his head above the political waters and began to wriggle his way toward a seat in the Legislature. Before I'd been in the place two months I caught him, red handed in a nasty piece of graft that turned my stomach. Of course, I said things in my paper and washed out a few articles of party linen in the editorial col-

"I came into his district and bought a country newspaper about the time he showed his head above the political waters."

umns. That started the fight, and it's been going ever since.

"But he was as slick as he was slimy and I couldn't always head him off. He finally landed in the Legislature and there he turned some tricks to make a square politician ashamed of his race. Later we locked horns for the Congressional nomination; he captured it, but was snowed under at the polls. In fact, the whole state went against us. He became the leader of one faction in the state and I flocked with the other. When we went into the Presidential campaign a sort of truce was patched up and I was made Secretary of the State Central Committee. The fight was a stiff one but by hard plugging we won out.

"Of course that cut a considerable figure in the general result and the President indicated that he'd like to do the handsome thing by us. The leaders of our side went on to Washington and had a talk with him. They told him that I wasn't much good in the log-rolling branch of politics but I couldn't be scared or bought; that I was too square-toed to make much head-

way for an elective position—in short, that I was just a plodder without any streak of graft in me. The President said that he was looking for just that stripe of a man for a certain place—and that's how I came to be appointed to this position."

"But," I interrupted, "didn't Soapy make a fight against your appointment?"

"Oh! yes; a little one, just to save the point," answered Hank. "But he was glad to have me taken out of the state so I'd be less in his way. He had some dirty schemes he wanted to work when I couldn't be there to watch him. And he worked 'em, too!

"Then came the Senatorial fight. All my life I've preached against offensive partisanship and insisted that the men on the government payroll, especially in the Departments here in Washington, ought to stick to their desks and tend to their knitting instead of riding the country in the interests of politics. So, you see, he rather had my hands tied on the score of offensive partisanship and there was

nothing for me to do but stay here and let the other boys make the fight against him.

"But he played the soap trick to the limit and finally landed—by the help of every big corporation doing business in our state. But he can't last for he can't pass up the chance to make a petty graft—and men who are after small graft invariably get careless and sooner or later play themselves into the hands of justice. All this and much more to the same point has made me break over and warn you against Senator Soapy."

Right after that talk with Hank, I met the Senator at the White House, waiting for an interview with the President. He buckled his arm through mine and said:

"We'll go in together—nothing private in what I want to see His Excellency about."

His Excellency!—that was just like Senator Soapy. He would have licked the President's boots in the presence of witnesses if he'd been given half a chance. His toadying in this direction later made him the laughing-stock of Washington. But to get back to my

story! We went in together and after Soapy had slobbered over the President a little he came to the point with the remark:

"I've come, sir, to call your Excellency's attention to a man by the name of Hanky Murray now holding a position as one of the Postmaster-General's assistants."

"Senator," interrupted the President, "I'm always delighted to have my attention called to this man. If your state has any more such men I will thank you to present their names. The public service needs more like him. It would be a personal gratification to me to advance him to a still higher position, but that is impossible just now. Besides, his rugged honesty and his plodding faithfulness are especially needed in the difficult place he now fills. Personally, I lean upon him heavily, for his loyalty and judgment save me from many complications and mistakes in the matter of appointments in the post office service."

That was the neatest blow from a gloved hand I ever saw given in high places. Soapy had come to knock his enemy out of official

Senator Soapy sees the President regarding the Assistant Postmaster General.

and political life and the President had taken the words out of his mouth, put forward the presumption that the Senator had called to ask for a promotion for him instead. Of course, Soapy was not fool enough to make any reply to the President beyond a muttered "Thank you, sir." I remained and as the Senator went out of the room I caught a gleam in the tail of the President's eye that showed he had been loaded for his caller and had given him this shot with malice aforethought.

After that Soapy and I didn't spend much time hanging over the garden gate together and the temperature of our relationship dropped to the zero point—and below. And by the same token, my friendship with Hank grew and flourished until we were as thick as two schoolgirls in the throes of a first feminine affinity. When the new President was elected and took hold of the plow handles Hank said to me:

"The first thing Soapy will ask of him will be my discharge. That was why he did such hard work in the campaign and never lost an

opportunity to crowd himself into the presence of the chief candidate. He thinks his eloquence and activity have made him so solid with the President that he can yank me out of my place on first call—and maybe he can."

Before the cabinet officers had warmed their chairs, Senator Soapy was on hand to pour his poison into the ears of the new President. But it so happened that a private friend of the Chief Executive had given him a straight line on the two men—and the word of that friend outweighed, with the President, miles of preferred charges and tons of Senatorial pull. I have it on inside authority that the setback the President gave Senator Soapy in that interview was something to shame a goat.

The Assistant Postmaster General stayed in his place and was made to feel that he had the confidence of the administration. With this backing he quietly plodded ahead and soon turned up some big frauds in the department that put a few fellows who had cut a wide swath in Department affairs behind the bars. While this made a big mess in politics it put

Hank's stock way up and made him so solid with the President that a load of dynamite couldn't have dislodged him.

About the time this rumpus began to quiet down a little, one of the head inspectors, who came from the Senator's state, dropped into Hank's private office, closed the door and said:

"There's something doing, now, sure. Last night Senator Soapy came to my room and made a—well; I'd call it a straight proposition."

You can bet the Assistant Postmaster General pricked up his ears at that and asked for a full bill of particulars.

"He said," continued the inspector, "that some mighty good friends of his were interested in financing a large industrial enterprise which had just been ruled out of the use of the mails by a Department order."

"A get-rich-quick-scheme?" interrupted Hank.

"Yes; and a rank one, too! Then he explained that they were good fellows, that he

was deeply interested in their welfare and that it would be worth a great deal to him if the inspector's report on the matter would be of a character that would lift the embargo against them and give them the use of the mails again. Incidentally he hinted that he could do a great deal for me. I told him I'd consider it."

"Did he say whether he made the request as a United States Senator or as an attorney?" inquired the Assistant Postmaster General.

"No, not in so many words."

"Well," returned Hank, rubbing his square rigged under jaw with his hand.

"You go back to him, get him to commit himself on that point. And have a man who knows him hid somewhere in your room as a witness."

Two days later the inspector returned, accompanied by his deputy.

"He said that he made the request as the attorney of the men—and this man saw him and heard him make the statement."

"That's all," said the Assistant Postmaster

General. "And it's good for a term in the penitentiary!"

The Federal grand jury did its work all right and the gaff that Soapy, the King of Grafters, had prepared for quiet, honest Hank Murray landed right under his own liver and there was an empty chair in the Senate and a well-filled cell in a certain penitentiary. If he's out now, I'll bet that his experience with the kind of striped clothes that are fashionable in prisons has spoiled Soapy's taste for loud-checked garments!

And so, again, I say unto you: "He who takes the graft shall also take the gaff!" I never think of either of those political perquisites without reverting to the history of Senator Soapy!

Regards to the wife, Ned, and long life to both of you.

Ever yours,

William Bradley.

FLIRTING WITH THE FIXER.

Wherein William Bradley tells a few tales out of school about the underground work of Captains of Industry in the field of official corruption and illustrates the stages by which a business man descends from maidenly shyness to brazen recklessness in the art of "fixing."

CHAPTER XX.

FLIRTING WITH THE FIXER.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

I am not at all surprised at what you tell me about the attempt of the corporation president to reach you and head off your restrictive legislation, or at the brazen way in which he went about the job. When a Captain of Industry starts in at the fixing business he's as shy as an unkissed school girl in her first flirtation; but after he's become a little seasoned in the art of subverting official honesty he gets to be as brazen as the queen of a Dawson City dance hall.

It always riled me to see the reformers get out after a bunch of petty go-betweens and make more noise than an old-fashioned township wolf hunt in full swing—only to pull off the dogs and call a halt when the trail led right up to the door of some prominent Captain of Industry who was too good to have anything

to do with politics. But if they could run down an insignificant fixer and land him it was a great moral victory that called for fireworks and the election of the prosecuting officers to some fat office, as a reward of merit.

The stages by which a fairly square business man descends to the moral plane of buying men right and left without a twinge of conscience, or consideration of anything but the price, are not generally known. I always wanted to take the lid off and look into the mental machinery of a man who had gone down that kind of a moral toboggan slide; and finally the chance came to me in a curious way. For six or eight years one of the slickest lobbyists that ever attended a session was hanging around the legislature. He was a mighty likable chap and had a way with him that got right in under your vest. But for all the fact that I cottoned to him from the start, I tried to land him and, session after session, had him watched and shadowed. But he was too cunning for me and sprung every trap I set for

him without leaving so much as a hair behind to tell the story.

Then, he suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth and I didnt' see a thing of him for years. In fact, I had almost forgotten him when, at the close of a campaign speech, in a Western town, he pushed through the crowd and shook hands with me.

" I've got a whole lot to tell you, Governor," he said, " and I want you to come up to the house, meet my wife and stay all night."

I was a little lonesome and the idea of spending the evening in a home instead of a hotel just fitted into my mood, so I accepted. His wife was a mighty sweet and comfortable little body and it was easy to see that she worshipped the ground Jim walked on.

When she went upstairs to put the children to bed, Jim and I repaired to the library, lighted up, and settled down to a regular heart-to-heart session. We'd never been intimate in the old days, but somehow he warmed up to me that night as if we'd been college chums.

" Governor," said Jim, " I'm mighty glad to

have this chance to tell you some things that may make you think a little differently of me than you used to. You led me a lively dance when I was in the fixing business and I was busier dodging your shots than a lame rabbit chased by a pack of beagles in full cry.

"But now I'm out of all that kind of game—and out for good. What did it? The little woman! When I met her and got a line on her way of looking at things I saw a great light and dropped the whole business like a hot potato. Not that I didn't always hate it—I despised it. But I was born into it. My first job was as a page for a shifty old Senator who made a pet of me. Before I was fifteen all the dirty tricks of official life were commonplaces to me and I lived in an atmosphere that made me feel that the only question about such tricks was whether they were done in a smooth or a bungling way. And as soon as the men about me found out that I was up to snuff and as clever as any of the old hands at the game, I was pushed to the front fast.

"Because I was young and everybody

seemed to take to me, the capitalists who had dirty work to do put the business up to me as swift as I could take care of it. Sometimes the jobs were pretty rank and I rebelled. Then they would simply put it cold that my hands were already dirty and that they could make it mighty hot for me. In other words, they had me; they knew it and I knew it, and they put the screws to me until I was ready to do anything they demanded.

" But you can bet on one thing, Governor—that I despised every psalm-singing hypocrite in the whole bunch of 'em. The boodle business starts right at the doors of the Captains of Industry, and those who are the loudest in howling for morality and reform are the meanest in the bunch. If men of their stripe didn't set out to get things fixed there would be precious little boodling and the professional fixer would be out of a job."

" Did you ever have a good chance, Jim," I asked, " to watch the way in which a capitalist starts into this game and develops as he goes along? "

" You bet I have! " he answered. " And it's funny how they change their tactics as they get seasoned to the game. There was old Donald McNeil—worth a million and as canny a Scotchman as ever sung a psalm. He sent for me to come to his house at eleven o'clock and ' rap lightly on the glass of the front door.' I did so, and he let me in himself. Evidently, all the other members of the family were in bed. Then he spent fifteen minutes preaching about the awful depravity of the gang of office holders that compelled respectable business men to resort to such ' doubtful means ' to protect their interests. Then he haggled about the price—a petty $300—thought $200 ought to more than satisfy the ' public leeches.'

" Naturally I expected him to hand out the currency and finish the matter up. No, sir-ee! He put his voice way down and confided to me that if I would go into the writing room of a certain hotel, the next day at sharp noon, I'd see a man, at the desk, wearing a speckled carnation. I was to wear one of the same breed. The man would probably get up and go as I

The "go-between" and the "fixer" at once recognized each other by their carnations.

came in and I was to take the place he vacated at the desk and look under the blotter for an envelope. There was a scheme that, as a non-conductor of incriminating evidence, was worthy of a sophomore detective, and I'll bet it had taken Old Don a week to figure it out. In spite of the fact that he was mighty nervous when he whispered the plan to me, the faint smile on his lips as he finished his directions told me that he thought it was about as cunning a scheme as was ever hatched.

" Well, it went through like clockwork; the carnation man was there at the writing table, took a look at my speckled posey and then got up and left. I dropped into his seat, picked up the envelope from under the blotter and then went to deliver the goods.

" A few months later I received a telephone call from Old Don asking me to meet him the next Sunday, in the park, at a certain hour. He was on hand and we took a walk into the open where there could be no eavesdroppers. This time he didn't waste any breath in sermonizing about corrupt office holders, but plunged

straight at the business in hand. I told him how much it would cost—a thousand dollars—to fix things up as he wanted them. After kicking on the price a little he finally admitted that the amount was just what he had figured on. Then he suddenly switched the subject, pointed to a distant tree and asked me if I could tell what kind it was. A minute later he said he must go and started away. I said I'd walk back to the cars with him when he incidentally remarked: 'Didn't you drop something?'

"On the ground was a long manila envelope and I was just about to spear it with my cane when he remarked: 'Oh! I wouldn't do that.'

"Of course, I tumbled then and picked up the envelope that he had dropped while I was looking at the scenery. This was a little bolder step, and I wondered how long it would take for the old capitalist to get actually careless.

"Not more than three months later, my telephone rang and old Don's voice called: 'Come over to my office right away.' I went and found my cunning, cautious old Captain of Industry in a howling rage. He used a good deal

While directing the "fixer's" attention to the beauties of the landscape, the capitalist dropped a long envelope.

The capitalist brazenly counted out the boodle without closing the door.

of language detached at random from the scriptures. After he once got it into his head that the only thing for him to do was to put up and put up heavy, and that it would take at least fifteen thousand dollars to grease the deal that he had in hand, old Don went to the vault, brought out several packages, broke the seals and counted out the money in bills of big denominations. As he lifted the last bill he exclaimed: 'Well here goes fifteen thousand dollars to hell—and, damn their hides, I'll never give them another cent!'

"'No so loud!' I interrupted. 'You don't seem to be quite as careful as you were at the start. In fact, I'd call it just a trifle reckless—the way you're carrying on today, leaving your office door wide open and handing out the goods in plain sight. Better use a little of the caution that you were so lavish with in the beginning.'

"'The infernal pirates!' was all he answered, as he fished around and found a shoe box for me to carry the money in.

"But it occurred to me that, while all of us

concerned in the dirty mess were pirates all right, he was not only the captain of the crew but the chief enlisting officer. And if I've been on the inside of one such deal I have in a hundred of 'em. There are plenty of clean men at the head of big businesses, as there are lots of clean men in politics—but I'll tell you, Governor, that these reformers will never bring the real forces of corruption to terms until they train their guns on the Captains of Industry and quit throwing away their shells on the smaller fry who are simply the errand boys of the capitalists."

Jim said a whole lot besides this before we broke camp and went to bed that night; but the best thing about it came out when the little woman joined us in the library and Jim incidentally took hold of her hand and said:

"She knows all about it, Governor; I made a clean breast of it before we were married. And she didn't have to do any private preaching or special exhorting to convert me to her way of looking at the business, either. My moral senses had been stunted in the atmos-

phere which I'd breathed from a boy up and I could justify every trick I'd ever turned by a mighty handy and plausible line of philosophy —that is, I could until I began to get in touch with her conscience. Then my moral eyes began to open and the rottenness of the whole thing stood out before me so I could really sense it. In fact, I could almost taste it. Right there I threw it up, took to plain business and married the girl. I haven't made more than a quarter the money I used to when I was single and serving under the Black Flag —but I've kept in the straight and narrow path and I never knew before what it meant to be a man."

The wife gave his hand a little squeeze and I thought I could see signs of mist in her eyes.

"Did you have any of the money left over from the old chapter to begin the new one on?" I asked.

"I should say not! That kind of money doesn't stick. If any one tells you that there isn't any difference in money, don't you believe it, Governor. There's just as much difference

in money as in folks. I didn't believe that once, but I know it now. You may put bad money—I mean money that comes in a crooked way—in a burglar proof safe and it'll get away. Mary and I 've seen some rather tough times scraping along, but all the money that we have had has been clean."

While I couldn't bring myself to feel with Jim, that about nine-tenths of the moral responsibility for a corruption deal should be assessed to the capitalist as against one-tenth to the fixer and the one fixed, I tell you, Ned, the boy is right in shouldering the heft of the blame upon the Captain of Industry who is bound to have his taxes reduced, his "interests protected," and his net income increased no matter how many men he has to bribe to accomplish his purpose. When your fighting blood is up and you want to get out after big game these suggestions may be of service in pointing the way to something that is practical and will hit the "great gilded God of Corruption" (as old Cal Peavey used to say) right where he lives.

A RETIRED POLITICIAN

I'm glad that Kate doesn't like Washington life first rate. It shows she's made of good sensible stuff instead of being filled with the kind of sawdust that goes into the regulation society doll. Give her my best regards.

Yours faithfully,

William Bradley.

KISSING BY FAVOR.

In which Ned is told several stories to show that a whole lot of well-meaning reformers fire their guns at half-cock because they can't get it through their systems that kissing goes by favor---especially in political life---and that the system of reciprocal backscratching has put through more doubtful legislation than was ever paid for in the coin of the realm.

CHAPTER XXI.

KISSING BY FAVOR.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

And so your committee appointed to investigate the shocking irregularities of your distinguished colleague from the old state has ordered a new whitewash brush and is going to bring in a report to the effect that it finds nothing beyond the regulation exchange of legislative back scratching—and that always has been and always will be a stock article in the assortment of Congressional courtesies. To be sure, it's considerably shelf-worn and a trifle damaged, but there'll never be a time when it will fail to pass as current coin on the floor of any House.

A whole lot of well-meaning reformers fire their guns at half-cock because they can't get it into their systems that kissing goes by favor. Unless human nature has changed a good deal from what it was in the days when I used to

occupy a bench in the old school house of District No. 10, alongside Kitty Nolan and the red-headed Crane girl, the same rule holds good today and has fewer exceptions than almost any other rule in existence.

The reason why the reformers and real investigating committees strike so many false leads and blind trails is because they forget this interesting fact of human nature and set it down that every kiss is marked in plain figures and is settled for in cold coin or its equivalent in listed securities.

I'll never forget a little experience I had along this line, myself, in the days when I was decidedly inexperienced in the devious paths of legislation. It was in my first term in the House, back in the old state. The leader of the House had taken good care of me in the matter of committees and, for all I knew, he was doing business on the square. Consequently, I generally consulted him on anything important that came up and, with few exceptions, acted on his advice. Probably some of

the other fellows put it that I took my orders from him.

One day he came to me and said: "Here's a bill for the opening of a street through the property of a widow, in Riverville; I've talked with a fellow from there who says they're trying to do her. Now, I'm not much of a philanthropist, but my mother was a widow and I like to see all of 'em get a good fair shake."

"All right," I replied. "I'm not very busy and I'll see the boys and ask them to help knock it out."

In a short time I had enough votes herded to kill out the measure. Then it passed out of my recollection altogether.

A little later a mighty innocent looking bill incorporating a bridge company with rights to construct a bridge across one-half the big stream at Riverville had slipped through first and second reading. Somehow I just happened to notice it one day and began to suspect that there was a crooked streak behind it. I knew old Simon Burns, the king pin of Riverville politics, and, on the impulse of the mo-

ment, I wired him to know if some of the fellows weren't getting meat out of it. He answered: "You bet. Don't let her slip through. I'll be there tomorrow."

There was a circus in town when old Simon arrived and a good many of the livelier members were absent from the House watching the girls in gauze shoot themselves through the hoops.

"We'll spoil the fun of that bunch over the river, all right," said Simon. "They're mostly from across the state line anyway. Just move the amendment that I've fixed up and we'll make their cake into dough in a jiffy."

The amendment simply substituted for the original incorporators the names of a bunch of solid business men in Riverville.

I saw that the right minute had come and I sprung the amendment without waiting for another word of explanation. It went through by unanimous consent, as slick as grease, and that settled it. I thought nothing more about it excepting to enjoy the joke on the fellows who had hatched the measure and left it with-

out a home guard while they went to the circus.

About a fortnight after the close of the session, when I was wondering where my next law case would come from and how I would pay the office rent, I received a telegram from old Simon telling me to come at once to Riverville. He wasn't given to sending out any false alarms and so I responded. From his place he took he into a new building, to an office that looked spanfired new and as neat as wax. Pointing to a handsome walnut desk he said:

"Young man, that's your desk. You're the general counsel of the Riverville Bridge & Iron Company and your job is to keep the company out of trouble until the construction work is finished. The salary will be $100 a month—and by the looks of things I guess you're likely to earn it all right. If you can't keep the coast clear we'll lift you out bodily and get some one who can, in double quick time. All you've got to do now is to wait for something to happen. Better put in your

leisure time talking with the superintendent and getting an idea of what has been done and what's likely to turn up."

Just then a hundred dollars a month looked bigger to me than a thousand does now and I was mighty anxious to hold down that job, I can tell you. The second day of my stay, before I had more than located the points of the compass, a fellow came rushing into the office, shouting for the "lawyer man." After he'd caught his breath I managed to get out of him that the company's whole force of workmen had been arrested on a charge of riot and were on their way to a justice shop, down the river.

Of course, I knew this was a move of the men who had put up the scheme in the first place and who had been knocked out by my amendment to the legislative bill of incorporation. When I reached the justice shop, I found it packed and the lawyer for the other side waiting to open up the legal battle. The law was as plainly on our side of the case as my nose is on the front side of my face, but as fast as I could put up the legal points, in the pre-

liminary skirmish, the justice proceeded to turn them down. There's some chance of getting an opening with a packed jury—but with a packed justice of the peace the unanimity of opposition is not only oppressive but overwhelming.

It didn't take me long to figure that my salary of $100 a month was the real issue in the case and that I'd get my dismissal in short order unless I could take a new twist on the case—and take it mighty suddenly. Under the circumstances that " assured income " loomed up on my mental horizon like a lighthouse in a fog. I did some quick thinking and decided that the only thing to do was to spar for time in the hope that some way out would open up in the natural course of proceedings. On this plan I jockeyed along and took occasion to contest every move and statement brought forward by the opposition.

The fight had been drawn out by this plan of petty skirmishing for about an hour without the slightest change in the situation, when a man leaned over my shoulder and said:

"Well, Bradley, how are you making it?"

For my life I couldn't call the fellow's name, although his face was familiar.

"Can't quite place me, eh?" he continued. "I'm Sam Evans—served in the last House but didn't make any particular noise, so I don't blame you. But what about this case?"

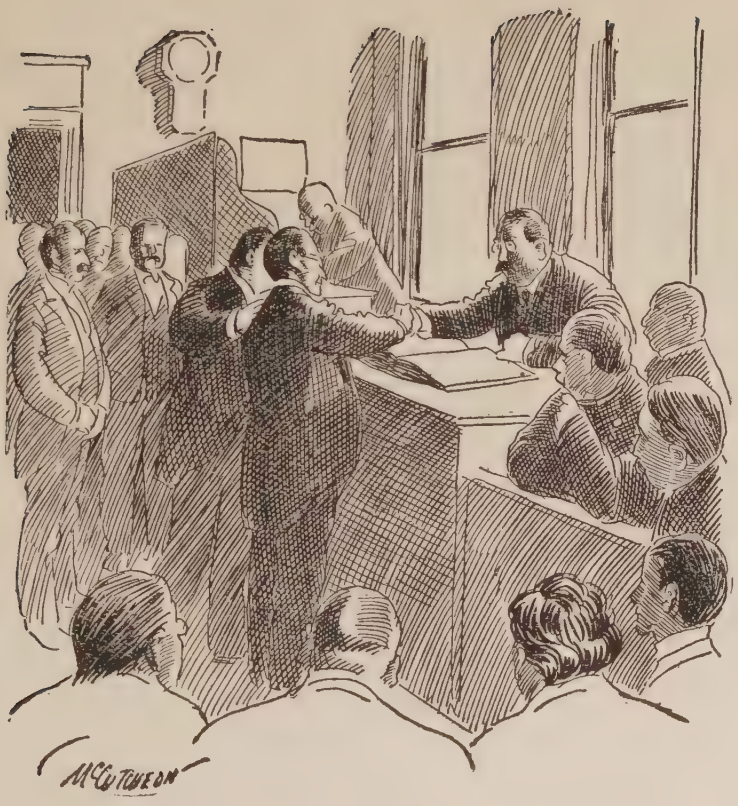
"The cards are all stacked against me—the judge knocks out every point I raise without regard to rhyme or reason. I guess the other side has got him all right—and this little fight makes a whole lot of difference to me, too."

"It does, eh?" he answered. "Well, I can tell you that if the judge knew you he would give you a fair chance all right."

With this Evans left me, went forward to the judge's desk, chatted a moment with him and then beckoned me to come to the desk.

"Judge Heffer," he said, "I want you to know my friend and colleague, Mr. Bradley. He's the man who knocked out the bill in the legislature, to grab off the widow's property by putting that street through it."

"Glad to meet you, sir," responded the



Proceedings were interrupted by an introduction to the justice.

Judge. "That bill was a most infamous attempt to rob my sister of her rights—but I suppose we must go on with the case now."

For a few minutes the opposing lawyer seemed to have things his own way, but suddenly, when a vital point arose, the Judge gave him a knock-out ruling. My heart gave a new thump of hope and I took another grip on the salary proposition. In an hour the tussle was over and I came out with a slick and clean victory. As I walked back to the office the old saying, "kissing goes by favor," kept running through my mind like the lines of an old song.

Later I had the nub of that saying rubbed into me good and hard. It was the winter when old Shellbark was governor. He could spit tobacco juice farther than any man on the state payroll and he could certainly read and write in a fashion of his own—but he didn't take to either of those pursuits just by way of pastime, for that sort of scholarly exercise was too much like work for him. Consequently he

was inclined to get as much help as possible along those lines.

That session the General Assembly ground out more bills than were ever put through the Senate and House before at any sitting. There were simply hundreds of them and they were carried over to the Executive Mansion in bushel baskets. Among those bills I had a measure that the people of my district wanted hard. It was straight as a die, although local in its application. During the whole session I had consistently put in my time snuffing out the loaded measures that came up—and it so happened that a good share of those that I succeeded in burying were engineered by Wash Peters, a little freckled runt of a for-revenue-only statesman from a slum district, up in the city. Naturally my pernicious activity made him sore and he swore he'd get even with me before the game was finished. It made him especially mad when the boys gave me the name of " the snake killer."

After the session was closed I thought that everything was snug and safe and so I went

The Governor had help in passing on legislative bills.

home on the first train. But Wash was in no hurry. He hung around the Executive Mansion with his side partner and managed to be on hand that afternoon when the Governor sat down to tackle the last bushel basket of bills. Shellbark sighed as he started in on his long job and found the reading mighty slow work. Finally Wash casually remarked:

"Governor, if Ed and I can give you a lift by reading off them bills and handing 'em up to you, we're at your service—don't want to crowd the mourners at all but——"

"Sure!" interrupted old Shellbark, "draw right up and give me a boost."

In a short time the two volunteer helpers were simply reading the titles and before the basket was half emptied the Governor was signing bills on the say-so of the boys, and about as fast as they could hand them up. Occasionally they would strike one that they knew the Governor was not in sympathy with and it would be handed over with the remark "Here's a snake."

Along towards the last Wash struck my pet

bill, and quietly passed it over to Shellbark with the crisp comment: "Another snake."

"Killed," answered the Governor as he put his veto upon it and reached out for the next document.

Those two scoundrels did more work that afternoon at the Governor's desk than they'd done in a week—but they taught me another lesson in kissing by favor as a fine art.

When you get right down to brass tacks there's a whole heap of variety in this kissing business, and I never was more impressed with this than by the experience of Lemuel Horton, who looked after the legal interests of a big corporation up in the city. He was as bright as a new tin dipper but hadn't had any particular experience in greasing legislation. The boys got out after his company with a healthy assortment of sandbags and he was sent down to kill off the bill. Like a good many of the reformers he failed to take into consideration the fact that kissing goes by favor and he calculated that it was a plain matter of buy and sell from start to finish.

One of the first men he struck was "Bull"

Kelly, a senator who held the whiphand in most of the underground work.

"You need just four more votes in the Senate," said Bull, "to kill out the measure. I'll see the right fellows and tell you tonight just what it'll take to cover the bunch."

That night he reported that $5,000 would do the business and that the necessary "Texas steers" had been rounded up on that basis. The money was paid to Bull and the bill was sidetracked.

When the session was over, Lawyer Horton was one day surprised to receive a call from a go-between who intimated that some of the senators who killed the objectionable bill had a powerful poor opinion of the way one Lemuel Horton played the game.

Now Horton was a sticker for honor according to his lights and he immediately invited Bull and the three senators whose votes had been delivered to meet him in a certain restaurant. They all entered appearance, had a good dinner and were just on the point of leaving when Horton turned to Bull, and looking him straight in the eye asked:

"Did I give you $5,000 for your own vote and that of these three men?"

Without batting an eye Bull replied:

"Sure you did."

"And did you pass any of it along to them?"

"Not on your life! Let me tell you, sir, that I wouldn't insult the honor of these gentlemen by offering them a bribe. I asked them to vote against that bill just to oblige a friend and they said they'd do it. And they did it, too. There isn't a stain upon their honor, sir, as big as a fly speck and I'll defend them against the slanders of the world."

Then, with a smile, Bull buttoned up his coat, said "Good bye, boys," and walked out of the door—fairly chuckling at the faces, blank with astonishment, that he left behind him.

No, Ned, the history of legislation can't be written without due attention to the text of "kissing by favor," and those who overlook this fact have yet to learn the game.

Yours as ever,

William Bradley.

"I wouldn't insult the honor of these gentlemen by offering them a bribe."

THE GAME AND THE CANDLE.

Ned has been elevated to the United States Senate and William Bradley is much moved by this big jump on the part of his protege. The old Governor cogitates on the question "Is the game worth the candle" and concludes that it is "If you play it square." Also he tells a story and points the moral: "Don't get toppy; don't get sloppy, and don't forget to put out an anchor to the windward."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GAME AND THE CANDLE.

Brokenstraw Ranch, ——, 19—.

Dear Ned:—

Whew! but how things do move! It doesn't seem but a few months ago when you were all torn up the back over the prospect of going to Congress. Now, before you've fairly had time to acquire the Washington habit and get a line on the main features of the landscape, the senior Senator from your state up and dies and your Governor promptly appoints you to fill the vacancy, with four years of unexpired term to your credit.

Of course it wouldn't look well in print, and I'll have to haul you over the coals a good many times to offset it, but I'm moved to remark, Ned, that the part these two statesmen have played in your promotion constitutes, in my opinion, the most distinguished and useful service they have ever rendered their state or

the nation at large—and I've known them both fairly well for a good many years, at that.

When I opened your telegram I flung my hat to the top of the haystack and let out a regular old-time campaign yell. Then I went out to the cottonwood grove and sat down on my "drumming log" to think things over. And as the breeze had fun with the leaves and the sun snuggled down to the edge of the horizon line, I couldn't help doing a little figuring on the old question: Is the game worth the candle?

After due debate I'm prepared to answer: Yes—if you play it square! And, as Sister Buck used to say in conference meeting, if I know my own heart I'm ready to answer at the last roll-call for the deeds in the body. Occasionally I've come dangerously near fighting the devil with fire and I've showed traces of Indian blood at times, but I've played the game square according to Hoyle, and I say it without shame. Some good people have only one rule for playing the game of politics—and

that is: Don't play it at all. On that basis I confess judgment; but not on any other.

I've kept a close watch on you, Ned, right from the start, and I'll confess that you've stood the test straight from the beginning. According to my notion you've touched the top notch in American politics for any man who has sense enough to know that he's neither weak enough nor strong enough to become President. For a real, live statesman, a seat in the United States Senate is as fine a field in which to start a furrow as he could find. But even there, you can't shut your eyes to snags ahead and you'll have to face several of them.

Did you ever stop to think that just two epitaphs will fit the tombstones of nine-tenths of the politicians and statesmen that ever lived or will ever die? One is "Kicked out" and the other is "Dead." The number of those who have played the game and retired from choice wouldn't make up into a respectable snap caucus. The next four years will go past you like a scared jack rabbit and then you'll be

a heap fiercer for a return to the Senate than you were for the appointment you've just landed.

You'll hanker for " vindication at the hands of the people " as the hart panteth for the waterbrooks—and besides that you'll be loaded up with more unfinished business than an open session of a woman's club. Of course, right now you feel pretty sure of your ground and the snags ahead are as far below the angle of your vision as a divorce is to the bride who hasn't shaken the rice out of her new clothes. But just let your Uncle Bill offer a suggestion or two that may come in handy four years from now, when the legislature meets to divide your garments.

Don't get toppy; don't get sloppy; and don't forget to put out a few sheet anchors to the windward.

Along at the beginning of my legislative service I had a mighty poor spell, weighed just a little more than my shadow and found it hard sledding to sit up and take notice during the day time. I guess I looked like one of

Uncle Seth Wheeler's lattice-work horses after being turned out to browse on hazel-brush for a winter. We had a new Speaker that session and he came to me, right at the start, and said:

"Young man, you've got to favor yourself or you'll go under. Here's a key to my private room. There's a big lounge in there and I want you to make good use of it. Don't be afraid that something'll slip through on the floor that you're interested in. I'll keep a sharp eye out for you and when you're needed I'll send a page after you."

That act of thoughtfulness went right home to me, for I wasn't cutting any wide swath then, our party had a big working majority and I had been for another man for Speaker in the caucus. In fact, Fire-eater—as we called the Speaker—hadn't much to gain by any attentions paid to me, and so I gave him credit for plain friendliness without any discount on the score of policy. And everything he did proved that he wasn't toppy or inclined to throw his front feet. Well, I used his room

and saved my strength when I needed all of it I could muster.

The next year we were due to elect a United States Senator and things were badly cut up on party lines, especially in the city. I stood in with the big man in city politics and he let me have my way about a good many things and listened to my advice about others. There was one district in which we'd never elected a man and couldn't hope to. One of the Crane boys, from my home town, had settled there and was running a big tin shop. He was strong with the Labor element and took a lively interest in politics.

"Tom," I said to him one day, "how would you like to go to the State Senate?"

"Why, of course I'd like to—but I never thought of it as possible."

"But it is," I answered. "You get the Labor nomination and I'll see to it that enough of our men vote for you to beat the enemy. We can't elect a man outright, but our votes, combined with your own party strength, will put you through all right."

He was wise enough to know that there was something behind this move and so he came straight out and asked:

"And then, what?"

"Just this: if we need your vote for a good man for United States Senator you'll give it when I say the word—and not till then."

"All right. I guess I can trust you for that," he said. He landed the nomination and the votes I threw his way elected him.

The first count of noses when the new members were rounded up on the skirmish for organization showed that we had just enough votes, to a man, to elect. But one of the senators, who had been in the House where Fire-eater had given him a deserved snub, gave it out that he wasn't going into the caucus for, if the former Speaker should get the party nomination, he wouldn't vote for him under any consideration and all kingdom-come couldn't force him to, either.

As I was chairman of the State Central Committee, it was up to me to bring him into line and, at first, I tried persuasion. But the more

I argued the higher he tilted his nose and the louder he swore that he'd stand out 'till grass sprouted again.

The morning after the gathering of the clans at the capitol Fire-eater sat down at my table in the hotel and told stories all through the breakfast. As we arose he said: "Bill, I'd like to see you up in my room sometime this morning."

"All right," I responded, "but there's one thing I want to say to you now."

"No," he interrupted, "save it 'till later."

"But I don't wish to," I insisted. "You haven't said a word to me about your position on the Senatorial fight, and before you do I'm going to tell you that I'm—for you!"

He grabbed my hand with a squeeze that made me cringe and said:

"Never mind about coming to the room. Just tell me if you've got a list of our new fellows."

I handed him out the document and his eye took in the names with a sweep. Then he

The Senatorial candidate was overjoyed at the announcement.

pulled three letters out of his pocket and filled in the post office address, commenting:

"These were the only ones I missed out of the bunch. All the others are reading their letters of congratulation by this time."

That was Fire-eater all over! He was right on the dot every time. The old Senator put in his appearance two days later and said: "Give me a copy of the list in the next few days—no hurry." And, seeing he felt that way about it, I didn't hurry, either.

Well, Fire-eater skinned him to death in the caucus, and then the lime light shifted to the obstreperous State Senator who had staid out of the caucus, breathing threatenings and slaughter against the regular nominee.

No one of the men in the party beside myself knew of the card that I held up my sleeve in the shape of my friend the Labor senator. First I made sure he would stand up to the rack if I called him—then I went up to the bolter's room for a little chat.

When I asked him if he hadn't concluded

to back into the fills and be good he bawled out:

"Never!"

"Look here," I came back at him, "You'll vote for him—and on the first ballot, too, by Mighty! And after that you'll get just what's coming to you, which is small potatoes. You'll shed your importance in about a minute."

Meantime the situation was strung up tighter than the G-string of a fiddle and the one who felt the strain most was the little wife of Fire-eater. She was in the gallery when the show-down came in the shape of the roll-call. Tom's name came before the upstart Senator's. I walked to the tinsmith's desk and simply whispered to him: "Pass for the present." As the bolter saw me do this his face turned gray with rage. Then his name was called. He stood up, balked, and finally said: "Under protest and in the interest of harmony——" The little woman in the gallery jumped plumb out of her seat when the renegade voted—and he was never allowed to finish his explanation.

"I've a good notion to vote with you any-

"You'll vote for him—and on the first ballot, too, by Mighty!"

"The little woman jumped plumb out of her seat when the renegade voted.

way," Tom said to me as the applause died down, but I told him to hold off as it wasn't necessary to go against his party.

For the rest of the session I took solid comfort in handing out sackcloth and ashes in liberal portions to that renegade Senator who tried to throw us—and when he came up for re-election I finished up the job by seeing that he was left at home. But it always scared me to think of what would have happened to us that year if I hadn't put out an anchor to the windward in the way of the deal that elected the little tinsmith to the State Senate on the Labor ticket.

Remember some of these things when you face the fight four years from now—and don't forget to let me know when you're going to make your maiden speech in the Senate—for I want to be on hand. And tell the wife I'm not a bit ashamed of the boy who dodged the widow and has patiently stood for a whole lot of advice from an old stager.

Yours ever,

William Bradley.